

# SERMONS

O N

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

A N D

# PRAYERS

Suited to

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

---

By the late REVEREND  
Mr. *JOHN HOLLAND*,  
AUTHOR of two SERMONS on INTEMPERANCE.

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Published from the *Author's* Manuscript, at the Request of many of the *Subscribers*.

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V O L. II.

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899/6





T H E  
C O N T E N T S  
O F T H E  
S E C O N D V O L U M E.

\* \* \* \* \*

S E R M. I.

A Conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ.

Ephes. iv. 1. *I therefore, the Prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith ye are called.* Page 1

S E R M. II.

Of Anger.

Ephes. iv. 31. *Let all Wrath and Anger—be put away from you.* 26

S E R M. III.

Reasons to moderate our Anger.

Ephes. iv. 31. *Let all Wrath and Anger—be put away from you.* 50

VOL II.

A

S E R M.

## The CONTENTS.

## SERM. IV.

The Nature and Excellence of Charity.

- 1 Cor. xiii. 1. *Though I speak with the Tongues of Men, and of Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal.* Page 77

## SERM. V.

Of Compassion.

- 1 Peter iii. Part of the 8th Verse. *Having Compassion one of another, love as Brethren; be pitiful.* 100

## SERM. VI.

Motives to Compassion.

- 1 Peter iii. Part of the 8th Verse. *Having Compassion one of another, love as Brethren; be pitiful.* 123

## SERM. VII.

The Nature and proper Objects of Liberality.

- Luke xiv. 12, 13, 14. *Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a Dinner, or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a Recompence be made thee. But*  
2 when



## The CONTENTS.

vii

*when thou makest a Feast, call the Poor and Maimed, the Lame, the Blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.*

Page 146

### S E R M. VIII.

Of Humility.

I Peter v. 5. Middle Clause. *And be clothed with Humility.*

169

### S E R M. IX.

Motives to Humility.

I Peter v. 5. Middle Clause. *And be clothed with Humility.*

188

### S E R M. X.

A Persuasive to Diligence.

Rom. xii. 11. *Not slothful in Business—.*

207

### S E R M. XI.

The Pleasure and Advantage of Friendship.

Prov. xvii. 17. *A Friend loveth at all times.*

227

### S E R M. XII.

The Nature of true Friendship.

Prov. xvii. 17. *A Friend loveth at all times.*

247.

S E R M.

## The CONTENTS.

## S E R M. XIII.

Directions for choosing and gaining Friends.

Prov. xvii. 17. *A Friend loveth at all times.*

Page 264

## S E R M. XIV.

The Duties of Friends to each other.

Prov. xvii. 17. *A Friend loveth at all times.*

287

## S E R M. XV.

Of the Dissolution of Friendship.

Prov. xvii. 17. *A Friend loveth at all times.*

309

## S E R M. XVI.

The Nature and Foundation of Virtue.

Philip. iv. 8. *Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are true, — honest, — just, — pure, — lovely, — of good Report; if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these things.*

329.

## S E R M. XVII.

Motives to the Pursuit of universal Virtue.

Philip. iv. 8. *Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are true, — honest, — just, — pure, — lovely, — of good Report; if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these things.*

355

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Mr. John Webster *of* Salop.  
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# ERRATA in VOL. I.

**P**AGE 27. Line 26. *for Duty read Deity.* p. 36. from *Benevolence* in 21st Line, to *as Immaterial* in 24th, should be in a Parenthesis. p. 49. l. ult. *indifferent r. insignificant.* p. 53. l. 11. *Pleasure r. Displeasure.* p. 60. l. 1. Who builds his hope on air of their, *&c. r. Who builds his hope on th' air of their, &c.* p. 96. l. 27. *vetnure r. venture.* p. 121. l. 7. *Brether r. Brother.* p. 146. l. 26. *reasona r. reasonably.* p. 147. l. 7. *here r. hence.* p. 199. l. 21. *continue r. continues.* p. 218. l. 6. *it any r. it in any.* p. 292. l. 16. *Worker r. Workers.* p. 302. l. 1. *dele it.* p. 304. l. 6. *of Siloam r. in Siloam.* p. 309. l. 18. *Mnner r. Manner.* p. 327. l. 7. *Vangeance r. Vengeance.* p. 346. l. 13. *the r. this.* p. 354. l. ult. *enlivens r. enliven.* p. 380. l. 24. *Attentions r. Attention.* p. 381. l. 23. *Affliction r. Afflictions.* p. 381. l. 25. *are r. any.*

# ERRATA in VOL. II.

**P**AGE 15. l. 21. *and unnecessary r. or unnecessary.* p. 25. l. 5. *or his r. to this.* p. 37. l. 12. *Resentments r. Resentment.* p. 55. l. 17. *to joyned r. to be joyned.* p. 82. l. 9. *MARYRDOM r. Martyrdom.* p. 92. l. 5. *different r. indifferent.* p. 121. l. 26. *dele may.* p. 124. l. 15. *sink r. sing.* p. 127. l. 13. *to unavoidable r. to the unavoidable.* p. 129. l. 26. *though never r. though it never.* p. 135. l. 9. *the r. this.* p. 141. l. 8. *dele to.* p. 142. l. 12. *more invincible r. a more insensible.* ib. l. 18. *after Soul put a semicolon.* p. 144. l. 17. *puffed r. ruffled.* p. 145. l. 14. *exalteth r. exhorteth.* p. 158. l. 22. *Affection r. Ostentation.* p. 161. l. 4. *relieve r. receive.* p. 185. l. 21. *dele in.* p. 195. l. ult. *to Inspection r. to his Inspection.* p. 211. l. 10. *having r. have.* p. 223. l. 15. *justify himself, r. justify this to himself.* p. 224. l. 15. *it r. is.* p. 227. l. 7. *the words r. these words.* p. 256. l. 13. *and any r. and not any.* p. 258. l. 9. *their r. the.* p. 260. l. 1. *Grief r. Griefs.* p. 273. l. 10. *of interest r. of his Interest.* p. 282. l. 16. *you know you are, what you are not r. you are, what you know you are not.* p. 293. l. 24. *bounds r. bonds.* p. 313. l. 1, 2. *conform not to his r. confirm not his.* p. 318. l. 5. *who can r. we can.* p. 319. l. 2. *to many r. to so many.* p. 320. l. 18. *unafflicted r. unaffected.* p. 321. l. 5. *much less r. not less.* p. 344. l. 3 *dele but.*

# ERRATA in the PRAYERS.

**P**AGE 6. l. 5. *secreat r. sacred.* p. 8. l. 19. *Enjoyment r. Enjoyments.* p. 18. l. 18. *the r. thy.* p. 23. l. 6. *and the workers r. and all the workers.* p. 40. l. 8. *Indulgencies r. Indulgences.* p. 41. l. 22. *dele our.* A cancelled leaf between p. 46. and 49. p. 54. l. 7. *conducted r. governed.* p. 77. l. 3. *dele back.*







## S E R M O N I.

A Conversation, becoming the Gospel  
of CHRIST.

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EPHES. iv. i.

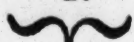
*I therefore, the Prisoner of the Lord,  
beseech you, that ye walk worthy  
of the Vocation, wherewith ye are  
called.*



YOU will observe the strong man-  
ner, in which the Apostle urges  
the Exhortation contained in the  
Text. *I therefore, the Prisoner  
of the Lord, beseech you; " I, Paul, who re-  
ceived my Commission immediately from  
" JESUS CHRIST, to preach his Gospel to*  
VOL. II. B " the

SERM.

I.



“ the World; and who am now enduring  
 “ Bonds and Imprisonment, in consequence  
 “ of my Fidelity in discharging my Office;  
 “ which Circumstance ought to give my Ad-  
 “ vice additional Weight with you; both on  
 “ the footing of common Humanity, which  
 “ naturally disposes Men to pay a high re-  
 “ gard to innocent Sufferers; and as my  
 “ Sufferings are an evidence of the Sincerity  
 “ and Uprightness of my Heart in what I  
 “ have preached to the World: *I beseech*  
 “ *you*: I do not assume Authority and Do-  
 “ minion over you, but by the Endearments  
 “ of Love, and with the Gentleness and  
 “ Goodness of the Christian Spirit, I request,  
 “ and intreat it of you, that you would  
 “ hearken to, and comply with this Exhor-  
 “ tation,” *viz.* That you would *walk worthy*  
*of the Vocation, wherewith ye are called.*

In enlarging on this Subject, I shall

I. SHEW, what is meant here, by the *Vo-  
 cation*, wherewith we are called.

II. WHAT it is to *Walk worthy* of it. And

III. OFFER some Arguments, *why* we  
 should be careful thus to walk.

I SHALL

## *the Gospel of Christ.*

3

SERM.

I.

I SHALL not need to say much on the *First Head, viz.* What is meant by *the Vocation, wherewith we are called.* It is, in short, the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, to the Profession of which we are called; and from which we are denominated: It is the *Gospel* of JESUS CHRIST, which we have delivered unto us, and which we openly receive, and declare to take for the Rule of our Faith and Manners. This *Gospel* or Religion of JESUS CHRIST, may be considered as consisting of these two Parts.

1st. As Instructing us in *Truth* to be believed. And,

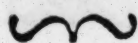
2dly. ENJOINING on us *Rules of Life and Conduct*; directing us what we are to perform.—If it be asked then,

II. WHAT is meant by *walking worthy of the Vocation, wherewith we are called?* I Answer briefly; It is to walk conformably to this Religious Profession we make: agreeably to the *Gospel* of CHRIST JESUS; as it is a Rule of Faith and Guide of Practice. For then, indeed shall we derive the greatest Honour, both upon ourselves and our Religion, when there is the most perfect Harmony



SERM.

I.



and Consistency between our Conduct and our Professions. — The *Gospel* of CHRIST, as I told you, consists in two Things; the Doctrines of Faith, and the Duties of Obedience: and, if we will walk *worthy* of it, we must live suitably to it, in both these Respects.

FIRST. We must endeavour to live agreeably to a sincere and hearty Belief of those Declarations of Grace and Mercy, that are revealed in the *Gospel*. In it we have the good News of Happiness and Salvation procured for Mankind by a *Mediator*: That JESUS CHRIST hath undertaken the great Work of reconciling Sinners to a just and holy GOD; and by that Reconciliation, to make a way for us to enter into everlasting Bliss. Now, we may be said to *walk worthy of this Doctrine*, when we live suitably to the Obligations, which this Grace of the *Gospel* lays us under. What Obligations these are, the *Apostle* tells us, *Titus* ii. 11, 12. *The Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.* It is the greatest reproach that

*the Gospel of Christ.*

5

SERM.

I.

that can be cast upon the *Doctrine* of CHRIST, that it makes Men Libertines, or gives them Indulgence to Sin. Some may perhaps argue, that if CHRIST procured Happiness and Salvation for Men, there can remain no Necessity for them to cultivate Holiness, or be very strict about their Conduct: But this is a wretched Inference, which the *Apostle* speaks of with the utmost Detestation. *Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid!* Certainly CHRIST never intended, by becoming a Propitiation for the Sins of Men, to encourage their Wickedness; nor that the Promises of the *Gospel* should be produced to invalidate the Precepts of the Moral Law: But, as the *Apostle* tells us, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.* The proper Influence, which the divine Mercy should have upon us, is to engage us to conform to the divine Purity, as the *Apostle* says, 2 Cor. vii. 1. *Having these Promises, i. e. The Promises of Grace and Assistance by JESUS CHRIST, let us cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting*

SERM.

I.

*iii. 3. And every Man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* Now, when the Grace and Mercy of GOD, exhibited to us in the Gospel of CHRIST, is suffered to have its genuine and kindly Effects upon us, to an holy and unblamable Life, then is our Conversation *worthy of the Vocation, wherewith we are called.*

SECONDLY. *To walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith we are called,* includes in it, that we live conformably to the Commands of the Gospel, which requires of us the Duties of a good Life, in order to our eternal Salvation.—There are some Virtues that seem to have a peculiar suitability to the Christian Profession: The *Apostle* mentions some in the Words next following the Text, *With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in Love, endeavoring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace.* These and such like Virtues, have a peculiar Suitableness to the Genius of the Christian Religion; and if we practise them, we shall walk worthy of it, and in the most effectual manner recommend and display



*the Gospel of Christ.*

7.

display the Worth and Excellence of it in the view of the World. More particularly,

SERM.

I.

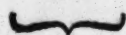
1. HUMILITY, and Lowliness of Mind, is a Grace, that exceedingly adorns the Doctrine of CHRIST: And therefore it is called, *The Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which in the sight of God is of great Price.* A

1 Pet iii.  
4.

proud, supercilious, self-conceited Christian, is a Monster in Religion. As an Excrescence in the Body is a Deformity and Blemish to it; so those Professors of Religion, that are pufft up with Vanity and Conceit, are Blemishes to the mystical Body of CHRIST; walk very unworthy of the Religion they profess, and bring a great deal of Discredit to it. There are two Sorts of Pride: One, which is conversant about the Body; curious in adorning that beyond Decency, and reckoning one's self better, than others, on account of this exterior Finery: The second sort, is that, which lurks inwardly; when men are proud of their imagined Excellencies and Perfections; proud of their Wit, their Judgment, their Eloquence, or any other of GOD's Gifts: Nay, some are proud of their Graces and Virtues, and even of their imagin'd Humility itself. Now, tho'

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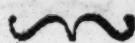
the former Pride may be more childish and ridiculous ; yet this latter, is not less pernicious and destructive ; both are contrary to the Precepts of the Gospel, and bring a Blemish on the Professors of it.

THERE are two Things, that render Pride, and especially in a Christian, disagreeable and hateful. 1. Because it renders men *Unsociable*. A Man of this Character looks on all others as below him ; hates a Rival, and scorns to have an Equal. If all will not submit to his Opinion in Matters of Dispute ; or to his Humour in Matters of Practice, he takes himself affronted by them ; and because he hath given himself a kind of Superiority over others, he looks upon himself as *wronged*, if others do not so too ; and suffer him to controul and govern them, as the only fit Person to do it. Hence we commonly observe, that though there is a kind of Love and Complacency, among all other Sinners, one to another ;—As the Drunkard loves his Companion ; the Thief his Associate ; and every Man labors to propagate his Vices to others, as many as he can ; yet seldom is it seen, that two proud Men can agree together ; For none is a greater Enemy  
to

to Pride in any but himself, than the proud Man: And that because this is a Vice, which always claims Superiority and Pre-eminence, which the proud Man cannot bear in any but himself.

SERM.

I.



2. PRIDE is always contentious, full of Quarrelling and Strife. If proud Men be touched in their Reputation, Interest, or even in their Fancy and Opinion; they presently storm, and cannot bear the least thing, which they imagine an Injury done them: And therefore saith the wise Man, *Prov. xiii. 10. Only by Pride cometh Contention.*— But how infinitely unsuitable is this to the Doctrine of CHRIST? The *Apostle* commands, *Phil. ii. 3. That nothing be done out of Strife or vain-glory, but, in lowliness of Mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.* A Temper, which, if ever Religion be delivered from Reproach and Obloquy, must be more carefully cultivated by the Professors of it, than it usually is.

II. ANOTHER Grace suitable to our Religion, is, *Brotherly Love, Kindness and Unanimity, John xiii. 35. By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* Love is a most beautiful



SERM. ful Grace, and that which gives a great  
 I. lustre to Religion, and makes it beautiful  
 too. It was that, which the Heathens took  
 most particular Notice of in the Primitive  
 Christians. We are all fellow-Members of  
 the same mystical Body, of which JESUS  
 CHRIST is the Head: Now, as there is a  
 Sympathy in the natural Body among the  
 Members; for if *One suffers, All the rest suf-  
 fer with it; or if ONE be honoured, All the  
 rest rejoice with it*: So it ought to be among  
 Christians: *For we are the Body of CHRIST,  
 and Members in particular.* As the *Apostle*  
*speaks, 1 Cor. xii. 26, 27.*

III. ANOTHER Grace suitable to Religion,  
 is, *Forgiveness of Offences* and *Love to Enemies*.  
 This is a Duty strongly pressed upon us by  
*St. Paul, Rom. xii. 21. Be not overcome  
 of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good*; By  
 Praying for them, and being ready to do  
 them all kind Offices of Humanity and Re-  
 spect. While we thus manage the Diffe-  
 rences, we have with others; whoever gets  
 the better here in this World, yet certainly,  
 at the last Day, the Victory and Crown will  
 be adjudged our's. This our SAVIOUR strict-  
 ly insists on, *Matt. v. 44. I say unto you, love  
 your*

*the Gospel of Christ.*

II

SERM.

I.

*your Enemies ; Bless them, that curse you ; do Good to them, that hate you ; and pray for them, which despitefully use, and persecute you : He adds an Argument ; That ye may be the Children of your Father, which is in Heaven ; for he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good ; and sendeth Rain on the Just, and on the Unjust.* And that he might enforce this Duty upon us, in the strongest manner, He has taught us to pray, that GOD would forgive us our Sins, upon this very Condition, that we forgive them that trespass against us.

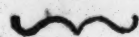
THUS I have finished what I intended under the two first Heads ; having shewn what is meant by *the Vocation wherewith we are called* ; And what is included in our *walking worthy* of it.

IT now remains, that I offer some Exhortations, which may be of use to engage us all to walk worthy of our holy Religion. What I propose to offer will be comprized under these two Particulars. 1. That the Profession of the Doctrine of CHRIST is most Rational. 2. That it becomes us to live according to the Profession we make of it.

I. ON

SERM.

I.



I. ON the first of these I shall be more brief; because, I suppose it is granted by all of us.—Even those profane Wretches themselves, who despise the Professors of Religion and Godliness, and make the Things themselves their Sport and Scorn; yet have not the Impudence to avow, that it is purely for their Profession; but pretend it is for their Hypocrisy, because they do not act suitably to it. The very Devil himself was forced to Confess, that Christianity is the Doctrine, that shews unto us the Way of Life and Salvation, *Acts* xvi. 17. All other Religions in the World, are nothing else but an *Huddle* of ridiculous Fooleries, or horrid Superstitions; which the Prince of Darkness could never have imposed on Mankind, had he not blinded their Eyes, and triumphed over their Reason.—The Excellence of the Christian Religion appears; *First*, In the Purity of the Precepts it prescribes. *Secondly*, In the Transcendency of the Rewards it promises.

*First*. THE Precepts of Christianity are most *Holy* and *Pure*. As for the idolatrous Worship of the *Heathens*, it was absurd and barbarous; and commonly cruel or obscene;  
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*the Gospel of Christ.*

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SERM.

I.

inſomuch that CATO was aſhamed to be preſent at its Solemnities. As for the *Jewiſh Religion*, ſo much of it, as is not incorporated into the *Gospel*, though there was nothing in it diſhoneſt or unlawful, yet it conſiſted in external Obſervances; ſuch as Circumciſion, Sacrifices, and diverſe Waſhings: which GOD, for Reaſons beſt known to himſelf, impoſed upon them, as it ſhould ſeem to keep them employed about the Ceremonies of their own Religion, who were ſo prone to fall into the Idolatry of other Nations. But the Doctrine of CHRIST, teacheth us *to worſhip him, who is a Spirit, in Spirit and in Truth*; and to employ ourſelves in thoſe Works, which have a natural and inſeparable Goodneſs in them. It requires us, *not to circumciſe our Fleſh, but our Hearts*: *Not to offer up the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, unto GOD, but the Sacrifices of Prayer and Praise continually*: *Not to waſh our Garments, or our Cups; but to cleanſe Ourſelves from all Filthineſs both of Fleſh and Spirit*: *Not ſcrupuloſly to abſtain from certain kinds of Meats; but to abſtain from exceſs in any kinds of them.* This is that Doctrine, which commands us to truſt GOD

John iv.  
24.

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SERM.

I.

in all our Affairs; to depend on his Promises, as the best Security; to love and fear him, who is perfectly good, and infinitely great, as the whole of the Service he requires of us. This is the only Religion, which reaches to our Thoughts and Affections, and lays the *Axe to the Root* of our Vices; it penetrates into the inmost recesses of our Hearts, and censures all the Wickednesses, that lie concealed there; which is sufficient to shew, that the Gospel of CHRIST excels all other Religions in the World, and alone is *divine*.

*Secondly.* THE Rewards of our Religion are most transcendent. *That which neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, GOD hath prepared for those that love him.* Other Religions either speak doubtfully of a future Reward, or else promise such a one as is *mean* and *sordid*; sensual Rewards fitted for a brutish Religion: But, our SAVIOUR, having taught us to love God, promiseth us the eternal Enjoyment of the God we love: He promiseth us no less for the *reward* of our Love, than the *object* of it: He assures us, that after a short Life spent here in his Service,

*the Gospel of Christ.*

15

SERM.

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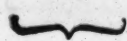
Service, we shall be released from all the Miseries and Troubles of this World, and received up to a better; where all our Hopes shall be fulfilled, all our best Desires satisfied; and all our past Labours abundantly recompensed; when both our Souls and Bodies, that have been Partners in this World, shall be Partakers together of inconceivable Happiness in the blissful Vision of God, and remain for ever in Joy and Glory.

THIS is the Religion, to the Profession whereof we are called. And judge now, whether it be not most Rational to profess it? Were there any other, that was either so pure and holy in its Precepts, or so excellent in its Promises, Mankind would not be to blame, if they adhered to it: But when all others, as far as they differ from this Doctrine of CHRIST, *are but weak and beggarly Elements, at best*; enjoining, either what is impure and unnecessary; and promising, either mean Rewards, or none at all; then certainly it will follow, that unless it be a wise part not to embrace and profess any Religion at all, it is Folly not to embrace and profess this. But there are certain natural Impressions and Characters engraven



SERM.

I.



graven upon our Minds of a Deity and supreme Power, that ought to be feared and served by us; that it is in short, as necessary for us to be Religious in some way or other, as to be *Men*. There are indeed many *Practical Atheists* even among *Christians* themselves, who live as without God in the World; many such Fools, who say in their Hearts there is no God; or, who having loose and mistaken Opinions of a DEITY, do not serve him as he requires; but for a contemplative *Atheist*, who will rest in it as the deliberate and settled Judgment of his Mind, that there is no God, I very much doubt if there be, or ever was such a one in the World: Wherefore, if to embrace some Religion be so natural and reasonable; and if all other Religions fall infinitely short of the Excellency of the Doctrine of CHRIST; it remains, that it is most *Rational* for us to believe and profess this Religion, and be ready to own it before all the World, that we are Christians. — I now proceed to shew

II. THAT, as the Profession of the Doctrine of CHRIST is most Rational; so *it is*  
fit

*the Gospel of Christ.*

17

SERM.

I.

*fit we live answerably to such a Profession:*

This is plainly undeniable. If it be reasonable to profess it, certainly it must be reasonable also to practice it; unless we intend to be Wise in Notions, and Fools in Practice. What Excuse can they, who behave otherwise, plead for themselves, at the dreadful day of Judgment? Must they not needs be self-condemned: Condemned by their own Profession, when it shall appear, that those things, which they have acknowledged to be most excellent, have been most neglected by them: And that GOD, and their SAVIOUR, whom they have profest with their Lips, they have deny'd in their Lives. Allow me to suggest to you the following Considerations.

I. CONSIDER, that Profession without Practice is but *meer Hypocrisy*; and *Hypocrisy* is the greatest Folly in the World. The *Hypocrite* trifles and plays with the all-seeing GOD, and thinks to conceal himself from *those Eyes, before which all things are naked and open*; than which, nothing can be more absurd and foolish.—Let us Consider further, what an infinite dishonor, we by this Practice cast upon GOD; while we lift up our

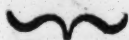
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SERM.

I.



Eyes or our Hands to him ; while we flatter him with our Mouths, though our Hearts are far from him : Is not this an opprobrious Treatment of Him ? Does it not bespeak us to think him so weak as to be pleased and put off with fair Words and empty Shews ? What mean and unworthy Apprehensions must he entertain of the Divine Majesty, who thinks to cover an ungodly, unholy Life with pretences of Piety and Devotion ? Is not this agreeable to their Language, who said ; *Psalms xciv. 7. The LORD shall not see, neither shall the GOD of Jacob regard it.* An Hypocrite must either disbelieve the Omniscience of God, or his Justice, and tacitly conclude, either, that he takes no Notice of his Sins, or that he will not punish him for them ; And so is worse than an *Atheist* : For as *Plutarch* well observes ; It would be a less Injury done him, if persons should absolutely deny, that ever there was such a Man as *Plutarch* ; than, if they should grant, that indeed such a one there is, but that he is a Fool, unjust or vicious : So, says he ; “ They speak not so ill  
“ of GOD, who deny that there is such a  
“ Being ; as they do, who acknowledge him,  
“ but

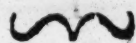


*the Gospel of Christ.*

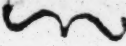
19

SERM.

I.



“but think him unwise or unholy.” This every *Hypocrite* does; who, while he professes there is a God, and gives him external Homage and Service; yet will dare to be loose, vain or debauched in his Conversation; unjust and oppressive in his Dealings: He must either believe, that this God does not see him, or that he will not punish the Insults offered him. But, says the *Psalmist*, *Understand ye brutish among the People, ye Fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the Ear, shall not he Hear? He that formed the Eye, shall not he See? He that chastiseth the Heathen, shall not he Correct? He that teacheth Men Knowledge, shall not he Know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of Man, that they are Vanity.* Doth not the Religion we verbally profess, represent God to us, as the Searcher of Hearts, and Tryer of the Reins; as a God, who looks quite through us, and discerns every Motion of a Thought, every Sally of a Desire; as an all-seeing and all knowing God; who will bring every secret and hidden Thing into public and open Judgment? Let us live then according to these Truths; live, as always under the Eye and Observance of our God;

SERM. as those, that apprehend themselves accountable to him, not only for the more remarkable Actions of our Lives; but for every  
 I.  Imagination of our Heart, every, the least Motion of our Souls; or else we convict ourselves of the veriest Folly, in not practising a Religion, which we believe and profess.

2. LET us Consider, that the Profession of Christianity, when our practice agrees with it, is our great Honour and Ornament. It is an Honour to us, in the esteem of all serious and sober persons, who will both think and speak well of us on account of our Profession, if there be a uniform Appearance of real Piety and Godliness in us. Now, as our Profession of the Christian Religion recommends us to the Esteem and Acceptance of good Men; so let us recommend that Religion to the esteem of evil and wicked Men, by a Life in all respects suitable to the Precepts of it. Let us not discourage the Hearts and Hands of the Good by our misconduct. They receive and acknowledge us as Brethren, and fellow Members with them of the same mystical Body: Let us approve ourselves, by the continual Holiness  
 of

*the Gospel of Christ.*

21

SERM.

I.

of our Lives, to be worthy of the Opinion, they have of us. Never let us give wicked Men Occasion by our Misconduct to open their malicious Mouths, and blaspheme the holy and venerable Name of God. There is no other way left, to recover and vindicate the injur'd Reputation of Religion, than by our leading Lives suitable to its Precepts: It's Reputation is trampled on, and insulted over by wicked Men, who scorn and deride it, who triumph in it's Disgraces: and when they catch the Professors of it guilty of any foul Miscarriages, reproachfully ask; "Where is now the effect of all "this stir about Religion and Piety?" Wherefore, Christians, If you have any regard for the holy Vocation, wherewith ye are called; shew the profane World, that even in this languishing State of Religion; when it is done Justice to, in the Lives and Characters of its Professors, there yet is Beauty and Lustre enough in it, to dazzle the Eyes of the most Malicious. To this purpose,

*First.* REDEEM its Credit, as to the *Doctrines of it.* Be not fickle, wavering and uncertain; but stand fast in the Faith: *Not tossed to and fro by every Wind of Doctrine.* Let



SERM.

I.

not every specious Delusion, every upstart, vagrant Pretender to be your Teacher, and Guide to a more strict sort of Religion, somewhat like that of the *Pharisees* of old, pervert your Minds with good Words and fair Speeches; which the *Apostle* gives as the Character of a Set of Deceivers in his Days. *Rom. xvi. 18.* And which agrees but too well with many in our's. The almost infinite variety of Opinions and Parties, that have crept into the Christian Church in all Ages, have torne it in Pieces: And each new Sect and Opinion, however absurd and vain, hath not fail'd to gain Profelytes to it; which hath caused many, who observed this to become *Infidels* and *Atheists*. They, seeing *Christians* are not agreed what to believe, will believe nothing; and clearly perceiving, that many Doctrines, that have a *run*, are false and absurd; are strongly tempted to reject all, even those that are True. As we are told of a certain Philosopher some Ages ago; who, when he enquired into the Christian Religion, not without an Inclination to have become a Christian; after he light on that monstrous Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* taught in the Romish Church, he immediately

*the Gospel of Christ.*

23

SERM.

1.

ately rejected all thoughts of Christianity ; and gave this Reason for so doing : “ *Since the Christians, said he, eat what they adore, let my Soul be among the PHILOSOPHERS.*”

Now, Christians, retrieve this lost Honour of your Religion ; and let it appear by your steady Adherence to the Scriptures, and your entertaining no Doctrines, but what have clear Evidence in them, that you account the Gospel of CHRIST the only true and infallible Guide, and that the Truths of it are built upon such rational Grounds, that neither the Subtleness of those, that lie in wait to deceive ; nor the Malice of those, who oppose them, can ever shake the Steadfastness of your Faith.

*Secondly.* REDEEM the Reputation of Religion, as to the Purity of its Laws. Let it appear, that the hardest Precepts it imposeth on you ; the Mortification of your Lusts, your Self-denial, Contempt of the World, with all its Honours, Profits and Pleasures, are not so unreasonable nor impossible as many esteem them to be : Let this appear, I say, by your constant chearful Performance of them. Recover again that Credit, which others or perhaps yourselves have formerly made it lose,

SERM.

I.

through a wild and vain Conversation; by your Holiness and Conscientiousness for the time to come. Convince the World, that you receive the Gospel of CHRIST, not as given only to fill up your more serious or melancholy Hours, but as a Rule for the Guidance of your whole Lives; and let its Influence appear in all your Actions. Till *Christians* will be persuaded to do thus, Religion must needs suffer and bleed: I pray God it may not utterly expire among us, through those Wounds it receives too often in the House of its Friends.

CONSIDER for your Encouragement, that if you thus Honour Religion, by a Conversation worthy of it, it will be your everlasting Honour; and as you will have made it glorious in this World, it will make you for ever glorious in Heaven. This is the Reward it promiseth, *a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away. Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father.* Matt. xiii. 43. And therefore they, who are careful to walk worthy of their holy Vocation, do but as it were beautify and adorn those Garments, which themselves are to wear; the Beauty and Lustre, that proceeds



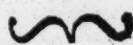
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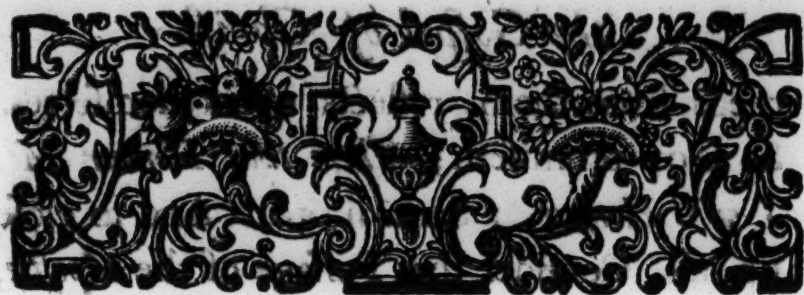
ceeds from them, reflects upon themselves.  
So GOD promiseth; *Them that Honour Me,*  
*I will Honour.* 1 Sam. ii 30. And to close  
up all, Consider that Passage of the *Apostle,*  
Gal. vi. 16. *As many as walk accordingt to his*  
*Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and on*  
*the Israel of GOD.*

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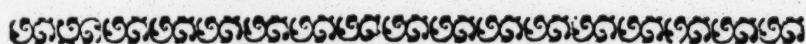


S E R M.



## S E R M O N    I I .

O f   A N G E R .



E P H E S . i v . 31 .

*Let all Wrath and Anger—be put  
away from you.*



S the Physician ought to know the Disorders of the Body, from whence they proceed, and by what means they are encreased or abated, before he undertakes the Management of them ; So to qualify us for calming the Passions of our Minds, with regard to which every Man should be his own Physician, it is of great moment that we understand their Nature, and the Circumstances,

stances, by which they are heightened or alleviated. SERM.  
II.

IN discoursing therefore upon this Subject, it may not be improper, in the FIRST Place, to explain what ANGER is ; and the CAUSES which tend to produce or enflame it.

ANGER is an Uneasiness of Mind, arising from a Sense of Injury, and exciting us to desire the Punishment of the Offender. It ariseth, I say, from a Sense of Injury, and not of a mere undesigned Harm. For though some are angry at inanimate Things, or at brute Creatures ; or at their Friends, when they hurt them by Accident ; yet this passeth for mere Frenzy : at least, it ought to be esteemed such, if their senseless Passion does not subside upon the first Reflection, that no Ill was intended against them. But Anger is commonly preceded by an Apprehension of Wrong ; whether that Apprehension is true or false ; built upon good Grounds, or only a confused and uncertain Imagination.

OUR Passion is apt to be moved, not only when we think we suffer an Injury, but also when we imagine, it has been conceived  
against



SERM.

II.



against us. Thus an unsuccessful Attempt to wrong us, will sometimes create as keen Resentment, as an unjust Design, which has been carried into Execution. Though indeed in the one Case we are usually more provoked than in the other ; because in our Estimation of Injuries, we regard not only the Design with which they are offered, but also the Damage or Pain, they would occasion ; and this Damage will seldom appear so great in the bare Idea, as in the actual Sufferance.

IT is often sufficient to make us angry, when we suffer by the Carelessness of others, whom we do not suspect of any direct Intention to injure us ; because we think, they ought to have been more observant of us, and more attentive to our Interest. But our Resentment is commonly greater in proportion to the Contempt and Ill-will, with which an Injury seems to be offered. As for instance, if it is done with Deliberation ; or if the injurious Person can propose little or nothing to himself, besides the malicious Pleasure of exposing and mortifying us.

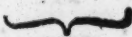
THIS Passion is not wholly of a selfish Nature, for we are sometimes provoked at  
the

## *Of Anger,*

29

SERM.

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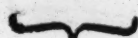


the Injuries, we see offered to others; especially to those, who are dear to us. Thus, who, that observes his Child abused, or his Friend insulted, does not resent it as much as when he himself is the Sufferer? It is true, in such Instances, our Anger may in part be owing to a Reflection, that he, who insults our Friends, betrays thereby a Contempt of Us; and so far as it proceeds from hence, I own, it must be resolved into mere Selfishness. But there is frequently something more disinterested in our Resentments; for we are often moved at the Injuries of such, as have no immediate Relation to ourselves; especially if we esteem them to be innocent and worthy Persons. Nay, gross Acts of Cruelty and Oppression, against whomsoever they are exercised, commonly kindle in generous Minds a warm Indignation.

FROM what has been said, we may easily observe, what sort of Persons are most subject to Anger; at whom we are most apt to be Angry; and upon what Accounts. Some are originally formed more susceptible of Anger than others; and their Passion appears in different Lights, according to the Difference of their natural Constitutions. In  
feeble

SERM.

II.



feeble Minds, it becomes Peevishness; in high Spirits, Rage and Fury. But besides this original Propensity, there are other Circumstances, which tend to produce or enflame an angry Disposition. Such as,

FIRST. Men of suspicious Tempers, who are accustomed to put the worst Constructions upon the Behaviour of others, are commonly prone to Anger: They also, who are most fond of outward Enjoyments, as Wealth, Honour and the like, are most easily provoked, when they are hindered in the Acquisition; or disturbed in the Possession of these things. The Insolent and Vain are usually quick and violent in their Resentments; for their Pride causeth them, both to claim extraordinary Deference, and to regard every small Affront, as an unpardonable Injury; and therefore, if the one is offered, or the other denied, they are prepared to resent it in an extream Degree: and most of all, when they are slighted in those Respects, upon which they principally value themselves. Thus, though he, who is proud of his Rank, may patiently bear the Imputation of being unlearned; and though one, who is proud of his Knowledge and Eloquence, may



## *Of Anger.*

31

SERM.

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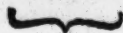
may not be offended, if he is not treated with all that Respect, which Greatness challenges; yet touch each of them in those things, which are the Objects of their Vanity, and you will perhaps find it no difficult Matter to move their Resentment.

THE same Persons are more disposed to Anger upon some Occasions, than upon others. When a Man's Breast is becalmed with Prosperity, and his Mind flushed with Joy and good Humour, no small Provocation will ruffle his Temper. But when he is hurried with Business, perplexed with Care, or fretted with bad Health and Disappointments, his wise Friends will be cautious of giving him the least Offence. The Vexation, he suffers upon other Accounts, makes him more susceptible of the Uneasiness which flows from a Sense of Injuries.

It appears then, what sort of Persons are most subject to Anger; and in what Frame of Mind they are most easily provoked; and they are apt to be angry at their Equals and Inferiours rather than at such as excel them in Rank and Character: for the Awe, which a Sense of superior Dignity creates, either prevents our Passion, or at least makes us  
more

SERM.

II.



more solicitous to conceal it; whereas towards our Inferiours, we both indulge and expresse our Resentments with greater Freedom. Besides, from our Inferiours we expect more Observance, and consequently are worse provoked, if they presume to slight or oppose us. And in general, the less Reason we had to look for Injuries and Affronts from any Person, the more we resent them. Thus they affect us much more sensibly, if they come from a Friend, or from one whom we have obliged, than if they proceed from an Enemy. A considerable Injury from the one will seldom move our Resentment, so much as a slight Word or a trifling Instance of Neglect from the other.

WE are frequently offended at our Friends, if they only omit the good Offices, we expected from them. We are angry at others, when they attempt to baffle us in our Designs, to frustrate our Wishes, to involve us in any thing, to which we are averse; or to hinder us from obtaining or enjoying those things which we value: and our Resentment is greater in Proportion to the apparent Injustice of their Behaviour, and the bad Disposition, which they manifest towards us;

## *Of Anger.*

33

SERM.

II.

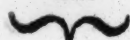
as when they injure us, without any Prospect of Advantage to themselves. Upon this account contumelious Words, even when they do not affect our Interest, are often more provoking, than abusive Actions; because by such Actions, our Enemies generally gain something to themselves: but by spiteful Reflections, they give a much clearer Evidence of pure Contempt and Hatred towards us.

So much may suffice to explain the Nature of Anger, and the Manner in which it works under different Circumstances. It consists in an Uneasiness of Mind, arising from a Sense of Injury, and attended with a Desire of Revenge. It may indeed be overruled and stopt in its Course, by Friendship, Virtue, or a prudential Regard to our own Interest; but in it's natural Tendency, and whenever it is allowed free Scope, it moves us to desire and seek the Punishment of those, against whom it is directed. When this End is gained, it commonly abates, which may be one Reason why we have less Resentment towards those, who acknowledge and repent of their Faults, than to such as remain insensible of them; because the for-



SERM.

II.



mer may seem to have suffered Punishment enough already in the Sorrow and Compunction of their own Minds.

HAVING then given some Account of this Passion, let us in the next Place observe the *Intention of Nature*, in making it a Part of the Human Constitution : for hence we shall be the better qualified to judge, within what Bounds it ought to be confined, and what Rules we should observe in the Management of it. When we fix our Attention upon the Calamities, which Anger daily produces in the World, it may seem at first Sight to carry in it some Imputation upon the Goodness of God, that he has implanted within us such a turbulent Passion: But if we consider on the other hand the good Purposes it answers in human Society, we shall find, that it makes a Part of our Constitution, which could ill be wanted ; and that, like other Objections against the divine Benevolence, it turns out rather an Argument of it.

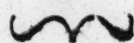
IN the FIRST place, Anger is often of Use to prevent Injustice and Cruelty : for many are deterred from abusing others by the Fear of their Resentment, whom no Principles of Virtue and Religion would have

## *Of Anger.*

35

SERM.

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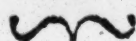


have been able to restrain. Conscious, that they may awaken a Passion, which will cause the injured Person to exert himself to the utmost in defending himself, and annoying them; and which may also engage others to assist him, they dare not proceed to those Acts of Insolence and Oppression, to which their Inclination would otherwise lead them. Hence it is wisely provided, that our Anger, perhaps more than any other Affection, expresseth itself by visible Marks in the Countenance, as it were informing the Aggressor, what he may expect, and warning him to desist at his Peril from the injurious Attempt.

ANGER is also further serviceable, as it animates us to a speedy and vigorous Defence of ourselves and our Friends, when their Rights, or our own are invaded. The cool Principles of Kindness and Self-preservation, would not always be sufficient of themselves to excite us to repel evil Treatment. Our Fear, if not our Indolence, would sometimes prevail over our Reason; and, to avoid the Danger and Trouble of a Quarrel, we should tamely suffer ill Usage, and thereby give Encouragement to Oppression. To

SERM.

II.



vent this, the Wisdom of God has furnished the human Breast with the Passion of Anger, which frequently makes the Coward brave, and rouseth Men to defend their Rights with Vigour and Resolution.

LASTLY, by means of Anger the Punishment of Crimes is sometimes better secured, than if Men were influenced only by a calm Regard to their own Preservation, and the Welfare of the Publick. Were Cruelty and Wrong always to go unpunished, we should soon see an End of human Society. But when Justice ought to be executed with Rigour upon Offenders, good-natured Minds are apt to relent with Compassion towards them, and would willingly suffer them to escape without due Correction. Hence Resentment was necessary to balance our Pity, and prompt us to use that Degree of Severity, without which the Peace and good Order of the World could not be maintained.

IT is easy therefore to vindicate the Goodness of God in making Man susceptible of Anger, which is calculated to answer such valuable Ends in this State of Imperfection. Nor does it seem at all desirable, that the  
Ge-



## Of Anger.

37

SERM.  
II.

Generality of Mankind were intirely divested of this Passion.

BUT what shall we say with regard to those, who study to improve their Nature, and are intent upon raising it to the highest Perfection, of which it is capable? Shall these endeavour *to put away from them ALL Wrath and Anger?* or only *to restrain it within certain Bounds?* A Point about which, the *Philosophers of old*, were much divided; *some* contending that we ought only to be moderate in our Resentments; *others*, that we ought wholly to lay it aside.

THEY, who maintain, that Resentment is blameable only *in the Excess*, support their Opinion with such Arguments as these.

“ Since Anger is natural and useful to Man,  
“ entirely to banish it from our Breast, would  
“ be an equally foolish and vain Attempt:  
“ for, as it is difficult, and next to impossible  
“ to oppose Nature with Success; so it were  
“ imprudent, if we had it in our Power, to  
“ cast away the Weapons, with which she  
“ has furnished us for our Defence. The  
“ best Armour against Injustice is a proper  
“ Degree of Spirit, to repel the Wrongs  
“ that are done, or designed against us: but if

D 3

“ we

SERM. " we divest ourselves of all Resentment, we  
 II. " shall perhaps prove too irresolute and lan-  
 ~~~~~ " guid, both in resisting the Attacks of In-  
 " justice, and inflicting Punishment upon  
 " those, who have committed it. We shall  
 " therefore sink into Contempt, and by the  
 " Tameness of our Spirit, shall invite the  
 " malicious to abuse and affront us. Nor  
 " will others fail to deny us the Regard,  
 " which is due from them, if once they  
 " think us incapable of Resentment. To re-  
 " main unmoved at gross Injuries, has the  
 " Appearance of Stupidity, and will make us  
 " despicable and mean, in the Eyes of ma-  
 " ny, who are not to be influenced by any  
 " thing but their Fears.

" AND, as a moderate Share of Resent-  
 " ment is useful in its Effects, so it is inno-  
 " cent in itself, nay often commendable.  
 " The Virtue of Mildness is no less remote  
 " from Insensibility, on the one Hand, than  
 " from Fury, on the other. It implies,  
 " that we are angry only upon proper Oc-  
 " casions, and in a due Degree ; that we are  
 " never transported beyond the Bounds of  
 " Decency, nor indulge a deep and lasting  
 " Resentment ; that we don't follow, but  
 " lead

## *Of Anger.*

39

SERM,  
II.

“ lead our Passion, governing it as our Ser-  
“ vant, not submitting ourselves to it as  
“ our Master. Under these Regulations it  
“ is certainly excusable, when moved only  
“ by private Wrongs: And being excited  
“ by the Injuries, which others suffer, it  
“ bespeaks a generous Mind and deserves  
“ Commendation. Shall a good Man feel  
“ no Indignation against Injustice and Bar-  
“ barity? not even when he is Witness to  
“ shocking Instances of them? when he  
“ sees a Friend basely and cruelly treated;  
“ when he observes,

“ Th’ Oppressor’s Wrong, the proud Man’s  
Contumely

“ The Insolence of Office, and the Spurns,  
“ That patient Merit, of th’ Unworthy takes.

“ SHALL he still enjoy himself in perfect  
“ Tranquility? Will it be a Crime, if he  
“ conceives the least Resentment? Will it  
“ not rather be somewhat criminal, if he is  
“ destitute of it? in such Cases we are  
“ commonly so far from being ashamed of  
“ our Anger, as of something mean, that

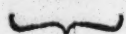
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SERM.

II.



“ we are proud of it, and confess it openly,

“ as what we count laudable and meritorious.

“ THE truth is, there seems to be some-  
 “ thing manly, and we are bold to say,  
 “ something Virtuous in a just and well con-  
 “ ducted Resentment. In the mean Time,  
 “ let us not be suspected of endeavouring to  
 “ vindicate Rage, and Peevishness, and im-  
 “ placable Resentment. No; such is their  
 “ Deformity, so horrid and so manifest are  
 “ their Evils they produce, that they do not  
 “ admit of any Defence or Justification. We  
 “ condemn, we detest them, as unnatural,  
 “ brutish, unmanly and monstrous. All  
 “ we contend for, is, that it is better to be  
 “ moderate in our Resentment, than to sup-  
 “ press it altogether. Let us therefore keep  
 “ it under a strict Discipline, and carefully  
 “ restrain it within the Bounds which Rea-  
 “ son prescribes, with regard to the Occasi-  
 “ on, Degree and Continuance of it. But  
 “ let us not presume to extirpate any of  
 “ those Affections, which the Wisdom of  
 “ God has implanted in us, which are so  
 “ nicely balanced, and so well adjusted to  
 “ each other, that by destroying one of  
 “ them,

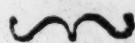
## Of Anger.

41

“ them, we may perhaps disorder and blemish the whole Frame of our Nature.”

SERM.

II.

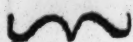


THIS Scheme, which gives some Quarter to human Passions, was likely to be more acceptable, to the Croud at least, than that severer Doctrine, which allows us not to indulge our Resentment upon any Account, or in any Degree whatsoever. Whether of these Opinions is the more just, is a different Question; which we shall be better qualified to resolve, when we have heard the Arguments on the other Side, and impartially compared them with each other.

“ You tell us, Anger is natural to Man ;  
“ but nothing is more natural to Man, than  
“ *Reason, Mildness and Benevolence*. Now  
“ with what Propriety can we call that natural to any Creature, which impairs and  
“ opposes the most essential and distinguishing Parts of its Constitution? Sometimes  
“ indeed we may call that natural to a *Species*, which being found in *most* of them  
“ is not produced by Art or Custom. That  
“ Anger is in *this* Sense *natural*, we readily  
“ grant; but deny that we therefore cannot,  
“ or may not lawfully extinguish it. Nature  
“ has committed to our management the  
“ Faculties

SERM.

II.



“ Faculties of the Mind, as well as the  
 “ Members of the Body ; and, as when any  
 “ of the latter become pernicious to the  
 “ whole, we cut them off and cast them  
 “ away ; in like manner, when any of our  
 “ Affections are become hurtful and useless  
 “ in our Frame, by cutting them off, we  
 “ do not in the least counteract the In-  
 “ tention of Nature. Now such is Anger  
 “ to a wise Man. To Fools and Cowards  
 “ it is a necessary Evil ; but to a Person of  
 “ moderate Sense and Virtue, it is an Evil,  
 “ which has no Advantage attending it.  
 “ The Harm it must do him is very appa-  
 “ rent. It will ruffle his Temper ; make  
 “ him less agreeable to his Friends ; disturb  
 “ his Reason, and unfit him for discharging  
 “ the Duties of Life in a becoming Manner.  
 “ By only diminishing his Passion, he may  
 “ lessen, but cannot remove the Evil, for  
 “ the only way to get clear of the One, is  
 “ by entirely dismissing the Other.

“ How then will Anger be so useful to  
 “ him, as to make it worth his while to re-  
 “ tain it in any Degree ? He may defend  
 “ his own Rights ; assist an injured Friend ;  
 “ prosecute and punish a Villain ; I say his  
 “ Pru-



## *Of Anger.*

43

SERM.

II.

“ Prudence and Friendship, his public Spirit  
“ and calm Resolution will enable him to  
“ do all this, and to do it in a much more  
“ safe, proper, and effectual Manner, with-  
“ out the Assistance of Anger, than with  
“ it. He will be despised and neglected,  
“ you say, if he appears to have no Resent-  
“ ment. You should rather say, if he ap-  
“ pears to have no sedate Wisdom and Cou-  
“ rage; for these Qualities will be sufficient  
“ of themselves to secure him from Con-  
“ tempt, and maintain him in the Possession  
“ of his just Authority. Nor does any thing  
“ commonly lessen us more in the Eyes of  
“ others, than our own Passion. It often  
“ exposeth us to the Contempt and Derision  
“ of those, who are not in our Power; and  
“ if it makes us fear’d, it also makes us pro-  
“ portionably hated, by our Inferiours and  
“ Dependants. Let the Influence it gives us be  
“ ever so great, that Man must pay very dear  
“ for his Power, who procures it at the Ex-  
“ pence of his own Tranquility and Peace.

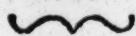
“ BESIDES, the Imitation of Anger, which  
“ is easily formed, will produce the same  
“ Effect upon others, as if the Passion was  
“ real. If therefore to quicken the slow,

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“ to

SERM.

II.



“ to rouse the inattentive, and restrain the  
 “ Fierce, it is sometimes expedient, that  
 “ they believe you are moved, you may  
 “ put on the outward Appearance of Re-  
 “ sentment. Thus you may obtain the End  
 “ of Anger, without the Danger and Vexa-  
 “ tion that attends it; and may preserve  
 “ your Authority, without forfeiting the  
 “ Peace of your Mind.

“ HOWEVER manly and vigorous Anger  
 “ may be thought, it is in fact, but a weak  
 “ Principle, compared with the sedate Reso-  
 “ lution of a wise and virtuous Man. The  
 “ one is uniform and permanent, like the  
 “ Strength of a Person in perfect Health;  
 “ the other like a Force, which proceedeth  
 “ from a Fever, is violent for a time, but it  
 “ soon leaves the Mind more feeble than be-  
 “ fore. To him therefore who is armed  
 “ with a proper Firmness of Soul, no De-  
 “ gree of Passion can be useful in any re-  
 “ spect. And to say it can ever be laudable  
 “ and Virtuous, is indeed a sufficiently bold  
 “ Assertion. For the most part we blame it  
 “ in others, and though we are apt to be in-  
 “ dulent enough to our own Faults, we are  
 “ often ashamed of it in ourselves. Hence  
 “ it

## *Of Anger.*

45

SERM.

II.

“ it is common to hear Men excusing them-  
“ selves, and seriously declaring, they were  
“ not angry, when they have given un-  
“ questionable Proofs to the contrary. But  
“ do we not commend him, who resents  
“ the Injuries done to a Friend or innocent  
“ Person? Yes, we commend him; yet not  
“ for his Passion, but for that Generosity  
“ and Friendship, of which it is the Evi-  
“ dence. For let any one impartially con-  
“ sider, which of these Characters he esteems  
“ the better; His, who interests himself in  
“ the Injuries of his Friend, and Zealously  
“ defends him with perfect Calmness and  
“ Serenity of Temper; or His, who pur-  
“ sues the same Conduct under the Influence  
“ of Resentment.

“ If Anger then is neither useful nor com-  
“ mendable, it is certainly the part of Wis-  
“ dom, to suppress it entirely. We should  
“ rather confine it, you tell us, within cer-  
“ tain Bounds. But how shall we ascertain  
“ the Limits, to which it may, and beyond  
“ which it ought not to pass! When we  
“ receive a manifest Injury, it seems we  
“ may resent it, provided we do it with Mo-  
“ deration.



SERM.

II.

“ dération. When we suffer a worse Abuse;  
 “ our Anger, I suppose, may rise somewhat  
 “ higher. Now as the Degrees of Injustice  
 “ are *infinite*, if our Anger must always be  
 “ proportioned to the Occasion, it may pos-  
 “ sibly proceed to the utmost Extravagance.  
 “ Shall we set Bounds to our Resentment,  
 “ while we are yet calm? how can we be  
 “ assured, that being once let loose, it will  
 “ not carry us beyond them; or shall we give  
 “ Passion the Reins, imagining we can resume  
 “ them at pleasure, or trusting it will tire or  
 “ stop itself, as soon as it has run to its proper  
 “ length? as well might we think of giving  
 “ Laws to a Tempest; as well might we en-  
 “ deavour to run mad by Rule and Method.

“ In reality, it is much easier to keep our-  
 “ selves void of Resentment, than to restrain  
 “ it from Excess, when it has gained Ad-  
 “ mission; for if Reason, while her Strength  
 “ is yet entire, is not able to preserve her  
 “ Dominion, what can she do when her E-  
 “ nemy has in Part prevailed and weakened  
 “ her Force? To use the Illustration of an  
 “ Excellent Author, we can prevent the Be-  
 “ ginnings of some things, whose Progress  
 “ after-

## *Of Anger.*

47

SERM.

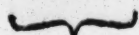
II.

“ afterwards we cannot hinder. We can for-  
“ bear to cast ourselves down from a Preci-  
“ pice, but if once we have taken the fatal  
“ Leap, we must descend, whether we will,  
“ or no. Thus the Mind, if duly cautious, may  
“ stand firm upon the Rock of Tranquility;  
“ but if she rashly forsakes the Summit, she  
“ can scarce recover herself, but is hurried  
“ away downwards by her own Passion,  
“ with encreasing Violence.

“ DON'T say, that we exhort you to at-  
“ tempt, that which is impossible. Nature  
“ has put it in our Power to resist the Moti-  
“ ons of Anger. We only plead Inability,  
“ when we want an Excuse for our own  
“ Negligence. Was a passionate Man to  
“ forfeit a hundred Pounds, as often as he  
“ was angry, or was he sure he must die  
“ the next Moment after the first Sally of  
“ his Passion, we should find, he had a  
“ great Command of his Temper, when-  
“ ever he could prevail upon himself to ex-  
“ ercise a proper Attention about it. And  
“ shall we not esteem it worthy of equal  
“ Attention; worthy of our utmost Care  
“ and Pains to obtain that immoveable  
“ Tran-

SERM.

II.



“Tranquility of Mind, without which we  
 “cannot relish, either Life itself, or any  
 “of it's Enjoyments?—Upon the whole  
 “then, we both may and ought, not mere-  
 “ly to restrain, but extirpate Anger. It is  
 “impatient of Rule; in proportion as it  
 “prevails, it will disquiet our Minds; it  
 “has nothing commendable in itself, nor  
 “will it answer any valuable Purpose in  
 “Life.”

THUS I have laid before you these different Schemes, and Reasons offered by each Party in support of their own. What is my Opinion in this, or in any other Case is nothing to the Purpose, for your Judgments ought to be determined by the Force of Arguments; not of Authority. Had the sacred Writings clearly decided the Question before us, all Dispute had been at an End: but it seems to be somewhat doubtful, what is the Sense of Scripture concerning it. When our Saviour condemns him *that is angry with his Brother, without a Cause*, he seems to intimate, that, he who hath a Cause, that is, who hath received from his Brother some gross Injury, does nothing wrong, though he is in some Measure an-  
 gry

Matt. v.  
 22.



*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

49

gry with him. St. Paul exhorts the EPHESIANS, that *they should be angry and not sin*: from whence it was natural to conclude, that all Anger is not criminal. On the other hand, the same Apostle mentions *Wrath among the Works of the Flesh*; and in the Words of my Text he expressly directs, to *put away ALL Wrath and Anger*.

SERM.

II.

Eph. iv.  
26.

Gal. v.  
20.

AND now I leave you to Judge for yourselves, whether of these Opinions is the more probable. I shall only remark, that on which Side soever the Truth lies, whether we ought to suppress Anger intirely, or only to confine it within the Bounds of Moderation, our Precepts and Exhortations must always take the restraining Side. The Passions of most Men want the Bridle, not the Spur; and to have too much Resentment, is a more common, as well as a worse Fault, than to have too little; if there is any such thing, as *having too little*.

I SHOULD next have proceeded to offer some Arguments against the Indulgence of Anger, and to point out the Methods we should take in order to subdue it.—But of this possibly at some future Opportunity.

VOL. II.

E

S E R M.



## S E R M O N III.

REASONS TO MODERATE OUR ANGER.

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EPHES. iv. 31.

*Let all Wrath and Anger—be put  
away from you.*



OW much it concerns us to moderate, if not to extinguish our Resentment will appear, if we consider the Vexation it produces in our own Minds; the bad Effects it has upon others; the Deformity of the Passion itself; and the Obligations, which our Religion lays upon us, to cultivate a meek and gentle Disposition.

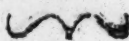
FIRST, let us attend to the Disturbance and Pain which Anger produces within us.  
Of

*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

51

SERM.

III.

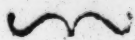


Of this I suppose each of us may form some tolerable Notion from his own Experience : for the most mild and good natured Persons have sometimes felt so much Resentment, as will enable them to judge what is the Condition of a Mind, that is actually under the Influence of this Affliction. It is in reality a most uneasy and grating Sensation; which has not in it, the least Mixture of any thing soft, gentle, or delightful ; and which, so long as it continues, makes us incapable of enjoying the most desirable Enjoyments. The only Pleasure consistent with Anger, is the most perverse and malignant, of which human Nature is susceptible ; namely, that which ariseth from the Hope, or Accomplishment of Revenge. And however delicious this may be thought, it is indeed nothing else, but the allwaging of a Pain : for, as the Cessation of great Torment, yields a soft and exquisite Satisfaction, so when Anger is removed by the Execution of its Desire in the Misery of another, the mind is delivered from its Burden, and becomes pleased and satisfied with the Sense of its Relief. Now if the Enjoyment, we experience upon such Occasions, is sweet



SERM.

III.



delightful, this only proves, that the antecedent Misery was in proportion grievous and tormenting.

HE that carries such a Fury in his Bosom, which awakes to disturb his own Peace upon every Instance of Provocation, needs no more to make him unhappy. Nor has he a true Enjoyment of himself in his calm Intervals: for to one not yet become thoroughly savage, the Review of his Passions will be no less painful after he has recovered his Temper, than the Agitations of it have been before. It is apt to betray us into those indecencies, which fill us afterward with Sorrow and Shame. We seldom fail in the Heat of our Resentment to say or do some foolish Thing. We disoblige a Friend, or exasperate an Enemy; we rush upon some greater Evil, than that, which provokes us; we entangle ourselves in a vexatious Quarrel; we sacrifice our Interest, Honour and Safety, to the Indulgence of a blind impetuous Passion: or it may be execute some illnatur'd Action for which, in the Hours of cool Reflection we are severely censured by our Minds. Then we vainly wish we could recal what we have past, and would give any thing to have them undone.

*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

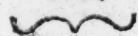
53

SERM.

III.

andone, which, at the Instigation of our  
Resentment, we had rashly committed. Thus  
Fit of Anger is commonly succeeded by a  
Fit of Remorse, and sometimes by a bitter  
and lasting Repentance. He therefore, that  
has acquired a Habit of this Kind, must be  
himself a miserable Creature.

LET us next observe, how it will affect  
his Character, as he stands related to Hu-  
man Society. A wrathful Temper, com-  
monly makes Men evil and mischievous, in  
proportion to the Influence they have in the  
World. When it is attended with great  
power, it forms the fierce and barbarous  
oppressor; the Terror and Plague of his  
unfortunate Dependants. And when it pre-  
vails in more impotent Persons, it inspires  
them with a Strength and Boldness, of which  
they are destitute upon other Occasions; and  
impels them at all hazards to seek the De-  
struction of those, who are the Objects of  
their Resentment. It often breaks through  
the most sacred Ties of Nature, Friendship  
and Humanity, in order to perpetrate the  
most horrid Acts of Injustice and Cruelty;  
and there are few Tragedies in human Life,  
in which it is not a Principal Actor.



A PASSIONATE Man, as such, is the less valuable, in every Capacity, and the more unfit for any Station: for besides that his Anger will blind his Judgment, and thus disqualify him for performing, as he ought, the Duties of his Place; it may also prompt him to injure and abuse those, with whom he has any Connexion. What should we think of such an one for a Prince or a Magistrate? should we have no Reason to fear that Justice and the Publick Good would ever be sacrificed to his private Resentment? Might we depend upon it, that he would exercise Lenity upon proper Occasions; and distribute Punishments in an equitable manner? Ought we not rather to expect, that in the Transports of his Rage, he would sometimes punish the Innocent instead of the Guilty; and the Guilty beyond all Proportion of their Offences? Which would a Servant choose for his Master, the mild or the passionate Man? Which should we like best for a Father? Which for a Brother, for a Companion, or a Friend? Would he indeed be the more agreeable, who is prepared to resent the least Failing; and will be often provoked with the most unblamable Conduct?



*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

55

SERM.

III.

Or is it prudent to associate with him, who creates to himself a multitude of Enemies, and would expect, that we should interest ourselves in all his Quarrels? With Him, who might perhaps infect us with a savage Disposition, and kindle in our Breasts the same evil and tormenting Passions, with which his own Temper is daily enflamed? It is not therefore a vain Caution, which Solomon gives us; *Make no friendship with an Angry Man, and with a furious Man, thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his Ways, and get a Snare to thy Soul.*

Prov. xxii.

24, 25.

WHAT Miseries do Rage and Peevishness occasion in *domestick* Life? How often do they estrange those Hearts from each other, which ought to joyned in the most affectionate friendship? How many Families do these infernal Fiends disturb; driving away Peace and Love, from the Dwellings, which they haunt; and introducing in their room, Contention, Hatred, and bitter Animosity? Thus that Place, which ought to be endeared by good Humour, and mutual Tendernefs; and where we expect to enjoy a peaceable Retirement, and sweet Repose from the Business of Life, becomes the most

SERM.

III.

uncomfortable of all Places. A Man's Passion makes him terrible to them, to whom he gives Security and Protection; and compels those to dislike him, without whose Love neither he himself, nor they can be happy. When he is calm, they dare not behave, but with great Reserve and Caution towards him; apprehensive, that his Anger will rise at a small Offence, and frequently without any just Provocation. And when they observe him ruffled with Resentment, they are either fearful of Abuse, or concerned for his Uneasiness; or (which is the greatest Misery of all) are seiz'd with the like tormenting Agitations. Such a Person must certainly have little Reason to boast of his own good-nature. For whoever is truly good-natur'd, will be uniformly so; but the passionate Man is good-natur'd only at certain Seasons; and then perhaps, chiefly by way of Atonement for his former ill-humours; and indeed all the Kindness he can affect to shew at other Times, is but a poor Recompence for the Distress he creates by Peevishness and Fury. I say, all the Kindness he can affect to shew, for we can hardly suppose that Man can possess any  
great

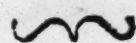
*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

57

great Degree of real Benevolence, who daily occasions exquisite Pain to such as ought to be dearest to him, merely for want of a little Attention to his own Temper.

SERM.

III.



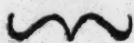
IT may appear from these Observations, that an angry Disposition, at the same time that it destroys our inward Peace, makes us evil also in our *social* Capacity, and deprives us of the Esteem of our Fellow Creatures; especially of those among them, whose Affection is most essential to our Happiness. As, then, we make any Pretensions to Good-nature and Humanity; as we have any design of being agreeable and dear to our Friends, let us put away Wrath and Anger from us.

How odious this Passion is, especially when it exceeds in Degree or Continuance, we may learn best by viewing it in others: for we are too apt to justify to ourselves our own Imperfections; and cannot otherwise so well perceive the Deformity, as when we behold the like Faults in some of our Acquaintance. Let us therefore observe, how such a Temper appears in them; remembering, that, when it prevails in us, it is no less shameful in itself, and in the Judgment of



SERM.

III.



of others, than it seems to us, when it prevails in them. Now which of us does not condemn in another, intemperate Rage? Who does not hate a peevish Disposition? Who but detests a Temper, that cherisheth lasting Resentments, and is implacable and obstinate in the Pursuit of Revenge?

ANGER deforms the whole Man. It strips the most amiable Face of all its Charms; and renders the sweetest Voice hard and disagreeable. Our Looks become savage, our Gestures indecent. We are transformed into Spectacles of so much Horror, that, if a Glass was presented before us, we could scarce refrain from blushing at the Sight of ourselves. What then if in like manner we could view the Mind itself? How great must be the Disorder, how foul the Scene within, the faint Representation of which in the outward form, is so highly unbecoming! When Passion usurps the Government of the Soul, every Grace forsakes it, and every Virtue. Discretion abandons the Head; Candour and Goodness retire from the Heart; Chearfulness gives Place to Grief and Vexation; Friendship to Malice; Kindness and Love to the Lust of Revenge. In short, for  
a time

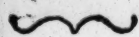
*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

59

SERM.  
III.

a time the Mind both becomes destitute of amiable Qualities, and is actuated by the worst and meanest Affections. Anger has therefore justly been termed a *short Madness*; because it extinguishes the Light of Reason, and leads to such extravagant Follies, as no sensible Man would commit. Thus it obliterates the Image of himself, which God has impressed upon the Soul of Man, and degrades him into one of the Savages of the Earth.

AND as Anger and Wrath are unbecoming the Dignity of a *reasonable Creature*; so they are utterly inconsistent with the *Christian Character*. For those only are real Christians, that obey the Precepts of the Gospel, and imitate the Example of JESUS CHRIST. Now the Gospel condemns unreasonable Anger, equally with Murder itself. It requires that we be meek and forgiving; that if at any time our Resentment has risen by Surprise, we don't cherish it in our Breast, *nor suffer the Sun to go down upon our Wrath*; that we cultivate the Spirit of *Charity and Love, which suffereth long, which it is not easy to provoke*; nor hard to appease; that *we put on Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind*;



*Mind, Meekness and Long Sufferings*; Dispositions most opposite to an angry Temper.

AND the same Spirit of Gentleness and Forbearance, which is enjoined by the Laws of CHRIST, is also strongly recommended to us by his illustrious *Example*; insomuch, that was any one Virtue more eminent than the rest in our Saviour's Character, I should think, it was Mildness. For though he suffered the extreamest Injuries, attended with the most aggravating Circumstances of Provocation, yet he maintained to the last an invincible Meekness; and seems to have conceived no other Affections towards his cruel Enemies besides Pity and Benevolence. Herein he hath left us an Example, that we should follow his Steps. If then we bitterly resent common Injuries and trifling Affronts, with what Face can we boast ourselves the Disciples of Christ, and call him our MASTER and LORD, who endured the worst Abuses with Mildness and Patience? To be consistent with ourselves, we must either renounce the Profession of Christianity, or put away Wrath and Anger from us. Let us therefore sincerely endeavour to resemble



*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

61

our Saviour in this Respect, and learn of him to be meek and Lowly; that so we may be his Followers indeed, and of the Number of those, whom he has pronounced *Blessed*.

SERM.  
III.

THUS we have considered the Arguments that should excite us to guard against a Spirit of Resentment. And from the whole it is evident, that this is a Disease of no small Malignity and Danger: of which, if we are thoroughly convinced, and are in any Degree subject to it, (as which of us is not more or less) we should be willing to know, what *Method* we should take to *prevent* or *cure* it.

AND FIRST, it may be of considerable use, that we frequently reflect upon the various Evils that proceed from Anger; as the miserable Vexation it creates; the Follies into which it is apt to betray us; and the Remorse and Dissatisfaction which it leaves behind it. Let us consider, how much more easy our Lives would be, could we learn to bear Provocations, with Calmness and Patience; how disagreeable, if not mischievous, our Passions make us to our Families, our Friends and Acquaintance;  
how

SERM.

III.

how much dearer we should be to them, if they always found us mild and good humoured; how shameful Fury and Peevishness are in themselves; how greatly they lessen us in the Judgment of others; how ill they become the Man or the Christian. Did we now and then silently revolve such Thoughts in our Minds, they would surely awaken our Caution, and excite us to resist our own Passions, as we would any real and great Calamity. Thus we shall be in a fair way to subdue our Resentments; for nothing is more necessary and effectual to this end, than a constant Attention to our own Tempers; which we shall be the more solicitous to maintain, the more we are convinced of the bad Consequence of neglecting it. If any thing threatens our Health or our Fortune, we guard against it with great Care; and shall we not esteem it worthy at least of equal Concern to preserve the Peace of our Minds, without which, neither Health nor Fortune, nor any thing else can avail to our Happiness?

LET us therefore be watchful over ourselves, especially when our Minds are in that Situation, which makes them the most suscep-

*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

63

SERM.

III.

susceptible of Anger; as when we are perplexed with Cares, wearied with Business, or fretted with bad Health and Disappointments. In those Circumstances we should double our Guard, and keep a strict Eye upon the Motions of our Spirits, which are perhaps then more subject to be ruffled by slight Provocations, than at other times by considerable Injuries. And, if we find it difficult to govern our Passions, it is prudent to avoid, as far as we can, the Occasions of Anger; not concerning ourselves in Disputes and Quarrels without Necessity; nor associating out of choice with such, as are likely to give us Provocation; as with the Passionate and Satyrical, the Proud and the impertinent. We should also restrain our Curiosity; for by catching at every Rumour and prying too closely into the Words and Actions of others, we commonly gain no other End, than to find out many Occasions of Anger, that might otherwise have escaped us.

BUT since after all our Caution, OFFENCES WILL COME, we should study to attain such a Command of ourselves, as will enable us to suffer them calmly. To this purpose,



SERM.

III.

pose, we should endeavour to lay aside all those Habits, which would dispose us to be quick and violent in our Resentments; and principally our *Pride*, which never fails to magnify the Affronts we receive. Nor should we indulge too great a Delicacy of Taste and Temper; for, if we are *difficult* to please, we shall be *easily* offended: he that is prone to Anger, should beware of contracting any singular Habits, and of entertaining a Fondness for such Things, as are most liable to be destroyed or taken from him; lest, when he is crossed in his Humour, or deprived of some favourite Trifle, he should be displeased at those, who are the Occasions of it. The Man, who is not over studious of Elegance in his Diet or Accommodations, who is moderate in his Desires, pliable in his Temper, and in a good measure indifferent about such things, as are in themselves of trivial moment to the happiness of Life, will calmly pass through many Occurrences, which move the Indignation of other Persons.

IT might also be of Advantage to us, if we counted upon meeting with Injuries and Neglects; that, when they befall us, we may

not

*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

65

SERM.

III.

not be surprized. Such things have always been frequent in the World, and daily happen to the best of Men; no wonder then, if we, who scarce pretend to be the best, have some share of these common Evils. Let us remember *where* we live, not in the *Golden Age*, or in some *Kingdom* of the just; but in a Society of Sinners, whose Numbers we ourselves encrease. We should not therefore expect to be always justly treated, nor require that strict Perfection from others, which they would in vain require from us. Thus when we suffer an Abuse, instead of exclaiming, *I could never have thought it*, (which if we did not, the Fault was our own) we should learn rather to imitate him, who being informed, that his Son was dead, calmly replied, "*I know that I begat him mortal.*" In like manner, when we are offended, suppose at a Servant, or a Friend, it may mitigate our Anger, if we can thus recollect, "*When I chose this Man for my Friend, or my Servant, I knew, he was but a Man like myself, and as such, obnoxious to Error and Folly.*"

SINCE most Injuries affect us either in our *Fortune* or *Fame*, the more remote we are

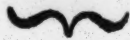
VOL. II.

F

from

SERM.

III.



from Avarice and Ambition, the less prone shall we be to Resentment. We should therefore aspire at that Elevation of Soul, which, enabling us to look down upon outward Enjoyments, and to despise whatever is obnoxious to the Power of Men, will place us almost above the reach of Injuries. If when we are slandered or defrauded, we can say to ourselves, what I have now lost is not one of those Objects, which I principally value; for these are such as (blessed be God) no Man is able to take from me: if these are really our Sentiments, what little Room shall we have for Anger? *My Enemies*, said SOCRATES, *may kill me, but they cannot hurt me.* Now, though we should not despair of attaining such an excellent Greatness of Mind, yet if we can only go so far, as to say, my Enemies may lessen my Pittance of worldly good, or asperse my Character, but they cannot hurt me; we shall bear with Patience those Wrongs, which most frequently occur.

OUR Anger is mostly proportioned to the Damage, we think we suffer, and the Malice, with which we imagine the injurious Person is actuated towards us. Hence we should



*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

67

SERM.

III.

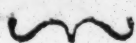


should be careful, that we do not fancy the one or the other to be greater than it is. But in general, we are so far from observing this Rule, that without being acquainted with the Particulars of his Case, I may take upon me to assure every Man, who is heated with Resentment, that neither the Injury nor the Offender, is so bad in reality, as in his own Imagination. It would be happy for us, if we could always prevail upon our Passion to wait, till we have considered whether the Evil, we suffer, is not indeed of small Consequence; whether we shall not regard it hereafter as a mere Trifle; whether, if we keep our Temper, we may not still live as happily as before. We should be ashamed to indulge a deep Sense of a light Injury; and if the Prejudice we have sustained, is not so inconsiderable, we have so much the less Occasion to add to the Grievance, by forfeiting also the Tranquility of our Mind.

“No, but it is not the Thing itself, which  
“moves you so much as the ill-will or Con-  
“tempt, which the injurious Person has ex-  
“pressed towards you.” Now perhaps his In-  
tention was much more innocent, than your  
Passion

SERM.

III.



Passion has painted it. The Conduct you resent, might be owing merely to Mistake or Inadvertance, he might imagine he was acting right; nay, possibly he did act right, and you judge wrong in thinking otherwise: you may have deserved such Treatment from him; it may be he did it with Reluctance, and was pressed to it by some urgent Necessity; at least it is highly probable, that what you impute to Malice and Scorn, proceeds from nothing worse, than a regard to his own Pleasures, Profit or Honour. Principles, which you may then more plausibly resent in others, when you can truly disclaim them in yourself.

NOTHING is more apt to make us gentle towards others, than a thorough Acquaintance with our own Failings; when therefore we are tempted to Anger, let us descend into our own Hearts, and perhaps we shall not find them intirely free from those Dispositions, which prompt them to injure us; and if we have never been betrayed into the like injurious Conduct, it may have been owing more to the Restraints of Fear and Shame, than to the superior Strength of our own Virtue. To speak the truth, how-  
ever

*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

69

SERM.

III.

ever unbecoming it may be, it is not, I doubt, very uncommon with us, to be offended at others for the same Crimes, of which we ourselves are guilty. Are we angry because our Friends neglect us? and may not some of our Friends as reasonably complain of our Indifference and Coldness to them? Hath any one censured us falsely? how often have we censured others with equal Injustice? Do our Superiours mortify and provoke us by their disdainful Carriage? and have we never made our Inferiours feel the same Pain, by our own Arrogance? Thus when we meet with Instances of Baseness, let us look inwards, and whisper to ourselves, “am I chargeable “with no such Folly?” Be that as it will, we are each of us guilty of numberless Crimes, for which we need Forgiveness both from God and Man; but with what Face can we ask or hope for that Mercy from either, which we deny to those that offend us.

THERE is also commonly something in the Character and Condition of the Person, that wrongs us, the consideration of which may restrain our Anger. Is he a *good Man*? he did it from no very bad Principle. Is he



SERM.

III.

our Benefactor? let us shew our Gratitude in excusing the Offence. If a *Relation*; let our Anger give way to the kindness of Nature. If a *Friend*; let us not lose him for a slight Provocation. If an *Enemy*; we cannot be surprized at it. If a *Youth*; we should consider his Imprudence. If a *Servant*; the Disadvantage of his Education. If an *Inferiour* he is below, if a *Superiour* he is above our Resentment. But, if he is *any* or *none* of these, still he is a *Man*, and as such is entitled to our Kindness and Forbearance: for he partakes of the same Nature with ourselves; he is our *fellow Citizen* and *Brother*; the *Offspring of God our Father*; and one, to whom we are united by the indissoluble Bonds of Nature and Religion. Notwithstanding his Injustice, therefore, we ought still to be well affected towards him; to desire his Happiness, and as the means of it, his Repentance and Reformation.

TRUE Wisdom and Humanity would teach us to regard the Man, who hath wronged us with unaffected Compassion; for the Harm, we have suffer'd, can be but a Trifle, compared to that, which he has brought upon himself in the Guilt of Injustice.

*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

71

SERM.

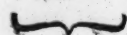
III.

justice. Perhaps he is now mourning his Folly, and smarting under the Correction of his Conscience. Or if not, yet sometime he must undergo this Punishment, or sink at last into remediless Misery. We pity the Person, who suffers undeservedly in his Fame or Fortune; but neither Disgrace nor Poverty, nor Pain nor Death itself, is so bad to an innocent Man, as the Guilt of Injustice to him who commits it. Such unhappy Men we ought to pity, not in pretence, but in Sincerity of Heart; which if we do, we shall be more desirous to reclaim them from their Wickedness, than to punish them for it.

THIS therefore is the Conduct, which Humanity recommends towards him that injures you. Instead of provoking him with illnatured Reproaches, endeavour in the Spirit of Humility and Love to convince him of his Fault. If you succeed, you have gained your Brother; if you fail, you have acquitted yourself. Instead of repaying his Malice with Revenge, heap your Benefits upon him, and they will make him ashamed of his ill Behaviour towards you, and melt him into Friendship. In subduing your

SERM.

III.



own Passion, you gain a glorious Victory. But if besides you can make your Enemy your Friend, you conquer at once both him and yourself.

CONSIDER the *Shortness of Life*; and don't waste it in Strife and Contention. Be reconciled speedily to him that has offended you, lest Death should interpose and deprive you of the Honour, by withdrawing your Enemy from you, or you from your Enemy. As much *as in you lies, live peaceably with all Men*, that you may die in Peace. Remember above all, the *Tribunal of God*: And the Law, by which he will judge you at last. If you forgive Men their Trespases, your heavenly Father will likewise forgive you; but if you forgive not Men their Trespases, neither will your Father forgive your Trespases. He that revengeth, shall find Vengeance from the Lord; and he will surely keep his Sins in Remembrance. Forgive thy Neighbour the Hurt he hath done unto thee, so shall thy Sins also be forgiven when thou prayest. One Man beareth Hatred against another, and doth he seek pardon from the Lord? he sheweth no Mercy to a Man, which is like himself; and doth he  
ask



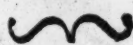
*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

73

ask Forgiveness of his own Sins? Remember thy End; and let Enmity cease, remember Corruption and Death, and abide in the Commandments.

SERM.

III.



DID we make such Reflections familiar to our Minds, they would doubtless be of great Force in calming our Passions, and promote in us the amicable Habits of Meekness and long-suffering. But we are not to expect that any thing will be effectual, without a daily, an hourly, an incessant attention to our own Tempers. Unless we can prevail upon ourselves to take these Pains, all the Maxims of Wisdom will signify nothing; and we must still continue the Slaves of our Passions. Allow me therefore again to recommend it as of the last importance, that we be watchful over ourselves; that we diligently attend to the Motions of our Spirits; that we observe and resist the beginnings of Resentment. Whenever we perceive ourselves growing warm, it is adviseable to suspend all Actions, till we have recovered our Temper. If we suffer not our Passion to proceed in it's Course, it will presently abate; whereas if we give way to it, and lend it the use of our Tongue or

SERM.

III.



our Hands, it will both gather Strength by Indulgence, and in all Probability, will prompt us to say or do something, for which we shall afterwards reproach ourselves. It is said of a very *wise Man*, that when he was somewhat provoked, his Behaviour was more still, his Countenance more pleasant, his Words fewer, and his Accents milder than usual; and that these were the Signs, by which his Friends understood he was moved. An Instance of his Wisdom, well worthy of our Imitation.

To conclude; be persuaded to take due Pains with yourself, and doubt not of proportionable Success. Industry and Care, without which you can acquire nothing that is Excellent, will give you the mastery over your Passion, and enable you to maintain the Peace of your Mind. Though Nature and Habit should both be against you, do not despair of overcoming them both; not perhaps at once; for such great things are not to be achieved in an Instant; but by Degrees, if you are not wanting to yourself, you will assuredly attain this noble End. If, says one, you would no longer be passionate, you must not cherish the Habit of Anger, and must cau-  
en-

*Reasons to moderate our Anger.*

75

SERM.

III.

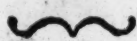
tiously avoid whatever would strengthen it, endeavour to be calm first for a Season, and number up the Days you have past in Tranquility. Heretofore you were angry every Day, perhaps many Times in a Day; now you have spent one Day in Peace; then two; three; and so on. And when once you have kept your Temper for thirty Days successively, you have gained the Victory, and should offer to God a Sacrifice of Praise.

THUS your Habit will first be weakened, and at length dissolved. The greater Difficulty you now surmount, the more Prudence and Virtue do you manifest, and the more Praise do you deserve. The Difficulty will also grow less and less, in proportion as the Habit wears away; and in a short time, both the one and the other will entirely vanish. In the mean time you will justly be delighted with the Sense of your growing Proficiency, and derive more Satisfaction from hence, than Pain from all the Injuries you suffer. You will find yourself becoming daily a better, and an happier Man. A better Christian; a better Relation, Friend, and Neighbour. But you yourself will reap the greatest Advantage from your own Gentleness,



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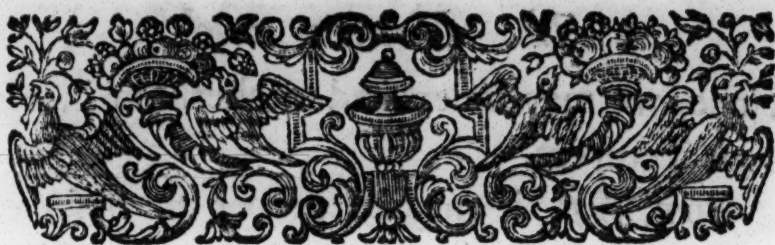
III.



tleness, and good Humour ; for as a Man's Passion is more hurtful and tormenting to none than himself ; so a mild and sweet Disposition, is more agreeable and beneficial to none than to the Person himself, whose Mind is endowed with this amiable Virtue.

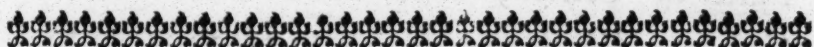


S E R M.



## S E R M O N IV.

### The NATURE and EXCELLENCE of C H A R I T Y.



I C O R. xiii. I.

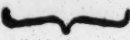
*Though I speak with the Tongues of  
Men, and of Angels, and have not  
Charity, I am become as sounding  
Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal.*



IN this Chapter the Apostle has drawn a most admirable Picture of Charity: All the parts of which I propose to consider distinctly in the ensuing Discourse. God grant, that while we meditate upon this greatest of all Virtues, and view it, as here described, in it's Nature, Properties, and high Importance,

SERM.  
IV.

tance, we may be excited to cherish it in our own Tempers.

 BUT, *first*, it may be proper to observe, in what manner this Encomium upon Charity is introduced, and how it stands connected with the foregoing Chapter. The Apostle, we find, is there discoursing of the Abilities, and miraculous Powers conferred by the Spirit upon those, who embraced the Faith of Christ; such as *Preaching, Prophecy, Working Miracles, Healing the Sick, Speaking with Tongues, and Interpreting the Scriptures*. He shews, that these several Gifts had each their Excellence, and conspired in promoting the Benefit and Edification of the Church: Nevertheless some of them being useful in a greater, some in a less Degree, he exhorts the **Corinthians**, without despising those that were least useful, earnestly to aspire after such Gifts as were the best and most excellent. But, says he, though these Talents, and miraculous Powers are wonderful in themselves, and being applied as they ought, may enable you to be serviceable to your Fellow-Christians; yet, behold I shew you something, which is far more excellent than them, unattended with



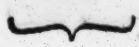
## Excellence of Charity.

79

SERM.

IV.

with which they all become contemptible and mean. For, *Though I speak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels, and have not CHARITY, I am become as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal. And though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge: And though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no CHARITY, I am nothing.* In these verses the Apostle asserts, that Spiritual Gifts, however extraordinary and wonderful, if they are not accompanied with Charity, as they have nothing in them truly excellent, nor are likely to render Men serviceable to others; so neither will they be of any Advantage to such as possess them. And though the supernatural Powers to which Charity is here expressly preferred, have long since ceased; yet I apprehend the Sense of the Apostle may justly be so applied, as to be of Use to Christians in all Ages. For if to speak all Languages by Divine Inspiration; if to know and foretell what is in Futurity; if to be instructed from Heaven in those Things which are concealed from the rest of Mortals; if to have a Faith that is attended with a Command over Nature, and a Power even

SERM. even to remove Mountains; if all these extraordinary Abilities are unprofitable and  
 IV.  vain without *Charity*; much more must that Learning, and Knowledge, and Faith be so, which any Christian in these latter Days can possibly attain.

IN Imitation, therefore, of the Apostle, every Man living may thus say to himself, Though I could speak all the polite Languages with the greatest Ease and Fluency; Though I could express myself in the best Manner, and with the most moving Eloquence, so that all who hear me should look upon me with Astonishment, as something more than Mortal, and admire me as an Angel come down from Heaven: Yet, if I am not influenced by Charity in the exercise of these Talents, they will answer no valuable End, either to myself, or others. As to myself, I shall not be a whit the more valuable in the sight of GOD upon Account of them: And while I use them only to procure the Applause of Men, and not to do them Service, there is but little probability, that I should obtain an End, which I never proposed. My Eloquence and Wit may render me, as it were, an Instrument of Sound,  
 that

*Excellence of Charity.*

81

that tinkles in the Ear, but leaves no good Impressions on the Heart.

SERM.

IV.

AND though I had such a thorough Knowledge of Men and Things as would enable me to judge probably of future Events; though I had travelled through all the Regions of Science, and dived into the Mysteries of every Art; though I understood whatever is most obscure and difficult in Nature and Religion; though I could dispute with ever so much Learning and Ability, and decide right in every Controversy; though my Head abounded with the justest Notions, and my Faith was sound and orthodox in every Point: Even All this Knowledge and Faith would avail me nothing, if in the mean time I wanted the Gift of Charity.

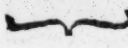
THE Apostle proceeds in the third Verse, assuring us, that the most striking appearances of Liberality and Fortitude are worthless and vain, when not attended with Charity, and animated by it: *Though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* From which Words it is evident, that though there may

VOL. II.

G

be



SERM.  
IV.  


be the greatest profusion of worldly Substance, and the highest degree of voluntary Suffering, where there is no real Charity; yet such Bounty, and such Sufferings, have nothing in them laudable and excellent; or that will turn to Account with regard to our Acceptance with GOD. We commonly term the bare Act of *giving to the Poor*, CHARITY; We may call it MARTYRDOM, to suffer in the Cause of Religion upon any Principle; but he alone is the truly Charitable-Man, whose Hand is opened by the Benevolence of his Heart: He only is the true Martyr, who dies in supporting a Religion, out of regard to the Welfare of Society, and the Happiness of Mankind which depend upon it.

WE may therefore enlarge in the following manner upon the Sentiments of the Apostle; If I contribute of my worldly Substance to the Wants of my Fellow-Creatures, either to gain a Recompence from them, or to feast my Vanity upon their Applause, or to excite in Spectators a good Opinion of my Generosity; if I relieve the indigent with my whole Fortune, upon these Principles, and not out of real Humanity; I have done  
nothing

*Excellence of Charity.*

83

SERM.

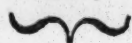
IV.

nothing, which GOD, who knows my Heart, will approve. Again, should I express an earnest Concern for the spreading of Religion, and take ever so much Pains to win Men over to my own Persuasion, not for their sake, but merely to acquire a Name for Piety and Devotion; in the Judgment of GOD, all my Labour would be vain, and my Zeal fruitless: Nay, should I give my Body to the Flames to manifest my Zeal, if this has not Charity for its Foundation, but ariseth from a Spirit of Obstinacy, or a Desire of being celebrated as a Martyr, I shall neither deserve nor receive any Reward for my Sufferings.

THE sacred Author having thus observed, that no Gifts and Abilities, nor the most heroic Actions are of any Value without Charity, proceeds to describe the happy Influence of this Divine principle on the Temper of him, who is inspired by it: And the first amiable Property he mentions, is *Patience in bearing Injuries. Charity suffereth long, and is not easily provoked.* It looks upon itself as nearly allied to all Men; and esteems no Injuries they may offer to it, suf-

SRRM.

IV.



ficient to justify an Alienation of Mind from them; it's Anger is kept down by it's Love for those who insult and wrong it. Whatever Injuries it receives, though it could avenge itself with Ease, yet in no case will it pursue an Offender, till it finds it necessary for the good of Society, or it's own Preservation: And while it meditates Punishment, it acts not from Passion, or a thirst after Revenge; but even from the same calm Goodness, which it breathes toward those that never offended it.

CHARITY *is kind.* To do good to Men, to spread Love and Peace, Joy and Happiness among them, as far as it's Influence can extend, is equally it's Business and Delight. It considers every Opportunity it meets with of obliging another, as a Blessing to itself. Nor content with performing only those good Offices that fall in it's way, it casts about and contrives how by it's Counsel, Fortune, or personal Service it may be most useful to Mankind around it: It attends to their Circumstances, and suits itself to the State of their Affairs; Advising the perplexed, Instructing the ignorant, Comforting the afflicted,



*Excellence of Charity.*

85

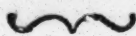
SERM.  
IV.

flicted, Relieving the indigent, and Assisting it's Friends according to it's Ability. Nor does it confine it's Kindness to those who are connected with it by the Ties of Intimacy or Blood. — That you are a Man, — That you are in Want, — That it is able to serve you without omitting any Duty of greater moment, are sufficient Pleas to engage in your behalf it's generous Aid. In short, the only Reason why it does not make every human Creature happy, is because it cannot.

CHARITY *envieth not* : It is proof against that ill-natured Pain which little Minds feel, when they see others out-stripping them in any Accomplishment. If such as were behind overtake it, equal, or get before it in the Race of Life, it can pray sincerely, that God would speed them: When it's Neighbour exceeds it in Ability or Fortune, it becomes at least his Equal in Excellence, by rejoicing in all his Advantages. Though it could wish its own Defects and Calamities removed; yet to see its Superiors brought down to a Level with it, would be far from affording it any Satisfaction. It observes their Miscarriages with a generous Concern,

SERM.

IV.



and is relieved, under it's own Disappointments, by the pleasure it takes in beholding their Success. Thus Envy and Charity are directly opposite in their Nature and Properties; for Envy delights in the Evil, and grieves at the Good of its Neighbour; Charity, on the other hand, is pleased with his Happiness, and grieved when Evil befalls him.

CHARITY *vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up.* It neither entertains itself, nor endeavours to create in others extravagant Ideas of it's own Dignity. Observing the Weakness of Mankind to be such, that most Men are dissatisfied when they see themselves out-done in Advantages of Mind, Body, or Fortune; it is not forward to display, or magnify it's Superiority over them in any respect: It rather seems to shrink down, as it were, to a level with its Inferiors, and hide from them those Advantages, the sight of which could answer no other End, but to put them out of Conceit with themselves, and their own Condition. Hence it supplies the poor, hardly appearing to take notice of their Poverty; and instructs the Ignorant without upbraid-  
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*Excellence of Charity.*

87

SERM.

IV.

ing them with their Defects, or setting off it's own superior Wisdom. It esteems no Mortal below it's Regard, because Heaven has placed him far below it in Rank and Fortune: On the contrary, it makes every Man, whom Vice and Guilt has not debased, it's Brother and it's Equal, as far as is consistent with the necessary Distinctions of human Society. It is of too high a Spirit to look upon any Office, as dishonourable to it, by which it can be of real Service to the meanest of those, who are the Sons of God, and the Brethren of CHRIST.

AND being thus free from Pride, it is, upon that Account, the less liable to behave itself unseemly: For, moderately speaking, one half of the Indecencies Men are guilty of in their Conversation and Commerce with each other, are owing to Arrogance, Vanity, and Conceit; from all which, Charity is secured by that Modesty and Humility which always attends it. And though a benevolent Man may not be so perfect in those outward Forms of good Breeding, which having no Foundation in Nature, but depending wholly on Fancy and Custom, are infinitely va-



SERM.

IV.



rious in different Times and Places ; yet his unaffected good Nature, and the Uprightness of his Heart, make ample amends for these trifling Failures.

CHARITY *seeketh not her own, but the Advantage of others.* Some, when they are doing good, are all the while looking at themselves, and consulting only their own Reputation or worldly Interest : They put on the Appearance, that they may gain the Fame of Virtue ; and that, by means of the Esteem it procures them, they may advance themselves in the World with the greater Ease and Security : But Charity is an entire Stranger to this kind of Policy ; it is too honest to deceive, too wise to be crafty and cunning ; it does good to Men, purely because it loves them, and would be satisfied with the generous Act, though no Recompence were to follow it, besides the Conscioufness of it's own Virtue. If the Fruit it bears is useful and good to others, it's end is answered, it's whole Design compleatly finished. Like the Sun, it warms and blesses the World with its Influence, equally

## *Excellence of Charity.*

89

keeping its Course, and shining on, whether Mankind praise or revile it.

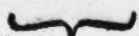
SERM.  
IV.

THE next Property the Apostle ascribes to CHARITY, *viz.* that it *is not easily provoked*, I have considered already: And proceed with him to observe, that it *thinketh no Evil*. Love fills it's Breast, and leaves no room there for Treachery, Fraud, and malicious Intentions. It never attempts to deceive its Neighbour to his Prejudice, and will not take the Advantage of his Ignorance to enrich itself at his Cost. You may securely entrust your Affairs in its Hands; for it will no more wrong you, if it has Opportunity of doing it in thick Darkness and the deepest Secrecy, than when it acts in the sight of a Crowd. It never deliberates about a mean Action, and is so far from committing Injustice, that it would no sooner think of doing it, than of attempting the most impossible Thing in Nature.

AGAIN, CHARITY *rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth*. It takes no Satisfaction in observing the Faults and Mis-carriages of Others; but is glad when it sees them excel in Wisdom and Virtue.  
Their

SERM.

IV.



Their laudable Conduct affords greater Delight than Malice conceives at the Slips of her Enemies: Nor is Malice more sincerely grieved at the Excellencies of those, against whom it is directed, than Charity is at the Failings of them it loves: It frankly gives to all Men the Praise that is due to their Merit, and is not forward to publish the Faults of any.

THIS leads me to the next Words, which are in our Translation, *beareth all Things*; but ought to have been rendered, *covereth all Things*: The same Word in the Original being used here, and doubtless with the same Intention as in 1 Pet. iv. 8. *Charity will cover a Multitude of Sins*. Unless when it would answer some good End, it will not reveal the Imperfections of it's Neighbour: In all other Cases it will industriously hide them, and be as cautious of exposing his Character, as of lessening it's own. As it does not indulge itself, so neither will it encourage others, in venting Slander and Detraction, by listening to their Censures with Greediness and Pleasure. On the contrary, it will endeavour to silence them by a cold

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## *Excellence of Charity.*

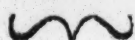
91

SERM.

IV.

Reception, or by openly expressing a Dislike to such Insinuations. When Malice attacks a Man's Fame in his absence, either with Falshood or Truth, it generally appears in his Defence; and either vindicates him from false Aspersions, or in the best manner it can, excuses and palliates what cannot be denied.

CHARITY *believeth all Things, hopeth all Things.* Persons of dark and malicious Natures are forward to entertain mean Sentiments of all around them: They measure others by themselves; and being sensible of little or no Excellence in their own Tempers, they can scarce believe there is any Virtue in the World. Hence they abound with groundless Distrust and Jealousy, put the worst Construction it will bear on the Behaviour of others, and are ready to condemn all Men as Knaves and Hypocrites. On the other Hand, a generous, honest Mind is apt to believe and hope the best of all Men, and counts upon finding that Goodness abroad, which it feels at home. Conscious of Sincerity in it's own Behaviour, it wonders if the World can be so bad as it is often represented, and frankly ascribes to  
worthy



worthy Principles every Practice that bears a promising Appearance. It esteems it more eligible to err on the favourable, than on the severe side; and would choose to think better than they deserve of many different persons, rather than to injure one good Man in it's Judgment concerning him.

LASTLY, *Charity endureth all Things.*

Fervent Love to Mankind inspires the noblest and most resolute Courage. It enables a Man chearfully to spend and be spent; to undergo Pain, Hardship, Disgrace, and Death itself in serving his Generation. Such was it's Influence upon this glorious Apostle, who seems to have distinguished himself above the rest of heavenly Spirits, by receiving into his Soul an overflowing portion of Benevolence. When he saw Bonds and Afflictions waiting for him in every place, yet none of these Things moved him; neither counted he his Life dear unto himself, so that he might promote the Spread of the Gospel, and thereby the Happiness of Mankind. Thus does Charity form the Hero, and the Martyr; and every other human

## *Excellence of Charity.*

93

human Character that is truly great and illustrious.

SERM.  
IV.



THE Apostle having thus enumerated the lovely Properties and blessed Effects of CHARITY; to crown all, he adds, *that it never faileth*. After it has adorned the Life of a good Man here, it shall not drop him at Death; but shall enter into Heaven with him, and be a principal Ingredient in his Happiness and Perfection to all Eternity. Upon this account, it infinitely excels all other Gifts and Abilities. As to *Prophecy*, it will perish as fast as Events come forward; the Use of *Languages* will be at an End, when our new Being commences; and the *Search*, which we here call, *Knowledge*, will be determined in what will be really such. All these Excellencies, which do but lead to the Arrival of what is more perfect, will necessarily have an End, when we shall come to that Perfection.

As the Understanding of a Child is improved by receiving Notices of Things which contribute to his good Conduct when a Man; but, though then necessary, are thrown aside when he is arrived at Manhood: so do all  
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SERM.

IV.

the good Arts of this Life contribute towards our obtaining Perfection in another; but, after we shall come into that future Being, will cease to be useful. As long as we stay in this World, we are all of us mere Children in Wisdom: And as a Man grown up to Maturity despises the Sentiments of his Childhood; so we, when we have attained the true Maturity of our Being, shall reflect upon that Knowledge, which now is so apt to make us vain, as trivial and contemptible.

At present, Truth is hard to be found; the Faculties we employ in the Search of it, are fallible and weak; and many intermediate Obstacles prevent our clear Perception of Divine Things: But when we shall arrive in the World of Light, all these Difficulties will vanish, and we shall know the most sublime Truths with as much Familiarity and Certainty as we do now each others Faces: Then shall Faith be lost in Vision, and Hope in Fruition; but Charity shall still abide.

Of these three therefore, *Charity* is, beyond dispute, the most excellent; forasmuch as Faith and Hope, as soon as they shall have  
assist-

## *Excellence of Charity.*

95

SERM.

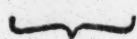
IV.

assisted us in obtaining eternal Bliss, will immediately vanish and die away. Whereas Charity not only is a necessary Preparation for immortal Happiness, but also makes a principal Part of it, and lives for ever with it.

THUS we have followed the Apostle in describing the Excellencies of this Divine Principle. From what has been said, let us learn, *First*, to guard against the Error into which the *Corinthians* were fallen, who, it should seem, were so transported with the Admiration of spiritual Gifts, as to overlook and neglect CHARITY, the best and most valuable of all Endowments. I am afraid we are many of us too apt to prefer the Abilities of the Head to the Goodness of the Heart, in our Judgments, both concerning others and ourselves. If we find a Man possessed of a considerable share of Wit and Knowledge, if he appears to have a large Acquaintance with Divine and Human Things, if he can also express himself with a ready and graceful Eloquence; this we admire as an extraordinary Man: And yet, if this extraordinary Man be void of Charity, he is nothing before

SERM.

IV.



before GOD; and his superior Talents may only qualify him for doing the greater Mischief in Society. His Wit and Eloquence may perhaps be employed in pleasing Mankind to their own Hurt, in order to gain *Profit* or *Honour* to himself; in overbearing the Modest, abusing the Innocent, defending Injustice, propagating Falshood, or riveting upon Men the Chains of Slavery and Superstition. In this Case he is worse than nothing, and, in the sight of GOD, infinitely inferior to any charitable Soul that, with common Understanding, sincerely endeavours to serve Mankind, and do all the good it can in the World.

WE may observe hence, in the *second* place, that Faith alone is not sufficient to Salvation. Too many seem to lay the whole Strefs of Religion upon a right Belief; and are persuaded, that if their Faith be sound and orthodox, nothing more is necessary to secure the Favour of GOD, and eternal Life: But here you have the Word of an inspired Apostle for it, that if you have all Faith, so that you could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, you are nothing.

AGAIN,



## *Excellence of Charity.*

97

SERM.

IV.

AGAIN, *thirdly*, When we are assured by the Apostle himself, that the greatest Knowledge in this World is but seeing through a Glass darkly; [and we must all own, that we have but faint Glimmerings and Earnests of better Understanding hereafter] How can it possibly enter into the Heart of a Christian to be inflamed with Rage towards other Christians for differing from him in points of Religion? The wisest among us cannot say, that the Difference between him and his Brother, is between the knowing and the ignorant; and not between two Persons who quarrel, because they are not in the same Error. It was therefore justly said to a warm Man, who, being in dispute with one that dissented from him, called him *Heretick*; "the worst of all Hereticks is the uncharitable Man."

BUT *lastly*, the best Use we can make of what has been said, is, that we be each of us persuaded to cultivate CHARITY in our own Tempers. Let us see what Improvement we have made in this excellent Virtue, by considering what Influence it has upon our

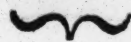
VOL. II.

H

Minds

SERM.

IV.



Minds and Actions. To be satisfied I have it in a due Degree, it is not sufficient that I dispense of my Fortune to the Indigent; for this I may do out of Ostentation and Vanity: It concerns me therefore to examine, whether I am Liberal, not from these mean Principles, but from sincere Benevolence? Am I patient when I am offended, and have Power to be avenged? Am I free from Envy, where I am excelled by such as I can never equal? Am I free from Vanity, for the little good of which I am conscious I am possessed? Am I unaffected, and from pure goodwill obliging to all the World? Am I more solicitous to do Men good, than to please them, and be admired by them? Do not I arrogate too much to myself? Am I not moved with slight Provocations, and apt to entertain unjust Suspicions? Do I never rejoice in Men's Faults and Miscarriages? Am I more apt to be pleased with their Virtues and Perfections? When I can suffer Hardships, and chearfully endure Calamities, for the sake of my Fellow-Creatures, I am endued with Charity. If I am possessed of this,

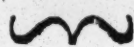
*Excellence of Charity.*

99

this, I am master of that which will last for ever: If I am destitute of it, though my Knowledge be ever so extensive, my Faith sound, and my Hope confident; all these will be unprofitable to me; my Faith and Knowledge at last will avail me nothing, and my Hope vanish in Despair.

SERM.

IV.



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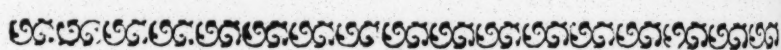
S E R M.





## S E R M O N V.

O F C O M P A S S I O N .



I P E T E R iii. Part of the 8th Verse.

*Having Compassion one of another,  
love as Brethren; be pitiful.*



N discoursing from these Words,  
I shall first consider the *Nature* of  
C O M P A S S I O N ; the *End* for which  
it was interwoven into our Frame;  
the *Degree* wherein it ought to prevail ; and  
the *Rules* we should observe in the Exer-  
cise of it. *Secondly*, I shall lay before you  
some Arguments, that should excite us to  
cherish a compassionate Temper ; and point  
out the means of attaining and improving it.

COM-

## Of Compassion.

101

SERM.

V.

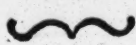
COMPASSION is Pain and Concern of Mind, on account of the apprehended Misery of others. Towards the same Persons, or such as have the same Characters, and the like Relations to ourselves, our Pity is proportioned to the imagined Greatness of their Affliction. Thus we feel the highest Concern for those Calamities, which are in our Opinion the most grievous and terrible; as *Death, Torture, Sickness, and Want of the common Necessaries of Life*. We pity in a less Degree those which we esteem lighter Evils; as *unmerited Affronts and Disgrace; Want, or Loss of Friends, and of such Enjoyments*, as we think *very agreeable*, though not absolutely necessary. It aggravates our Compassion, when the Evils which befall our fellow Creatures, come upon them unexpectedly; when great Prosperity is at once changed into extreme Distress; or when they reap Affliction from those Persons and Things, from whence they had promised themselves no small Delight and Satisfaction: In these Cases the Comparison of their Misfortunes with the Happiness they had before enjoyed or expected, makes them to appear the more deplorable. In short, our Pity is

H 3

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SERM.

V.



excited by those Things, when they happen to others, the presence of which occasions Grief, and the prospect Fear, when they happen to ourselves.

THE Innocence and Merit of a Sufferer powerfully recommends him to the Compassion of Mankind; for these things conciliate Esteem, and Esteem is nearly allyed to Compassion, and strengthens it exceedingly. But when bad Men are unfortunate, or bring Misery upon themselves by their own Folly and Vice, our Pity for their Sufferings is often swallowed up in Resentment of their Crimes. We also pity our Friends, our Acquaintance, and such as resemble us in Age, Character and Profession, more than we do others in the like Distress.

SOME Men are more compassionate than others; not only as Nature has given them originally more tender Minds, but also upon other Accounts. Such, as have many close Connexions of Nature and Friendship, are generally very susceptible of humane Sentiments; both because their social Affections meet with frequent Exercise, and because many are dear to them, who they know are liable to the Calamities of Life. Compassi-  
on

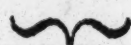


## *Of Compassion.*

103

SERM.

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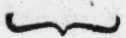
on is oftner found in the considerate and serious, than in the gay and thoughtless; for the former enter more deeply into the Concerns of others, and are more attentive to their Sufferings. Men, who have lived in continual Ease, and never felt what it is to be miserable, have not commonly much Compassion. Those on the other hand are most apt to commiserate the Calamities of others, who have endured the same, or the like Afflictions themselves; because from their own Experience they are fully sensible of their Weight, and of those Aggravations, which may escape the Attention of others. Such also as fear, that any Misfortune will happen to themselves or their Friends, are prone to pity those whom they observe to be exercised with it. Thus the weak and timorous are usually very Compassionate; and the Old have more Tenderness than the Young; as they are more Considerate, have suffered more Calamities, and through a Sense of their own Infirmary are more fearful.

HENCE some have inferred, that Compassion for others, is nothing but fear for ourselves; an Error, which it were more

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SERM.

V.  


easy perhaps than necessary to confute ; since it never was, nor will be embraced by any, but those who forsake Nature and common Sense, and apply themselves to frame Schemes in Philosophy out of their own Imaginations. For let any one consult his own Breast, when he sees a Friend in Distress, and say, whether he does not feel an Emotion of Mind entirely different from mere Fear ? Whether he is not affected in quite another manner, than when he only apprehends Danger to himself ? Indeed upon such an Occasion nothing is more natural than a Reflection upon our own liableness to Calamity, which may awaken our Fear ; but besides this, we are also sensible of a tender Concern which arises purely from the Sense of another's Misery, which reaches out beyond ourselves to the unfortunate Object, and which we should still continue to feel, though we were assured from Heaven we should never undergo the like Affliction.

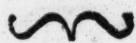
Do we not in fact sometimes pity the Misfortunes of others, when we have not the least Apprehensions of suffering them ourselves ? Nay, when it is impossible they should ever befall us ? Should we not sympathize

## Of Compassion.

105

SERM.

V.



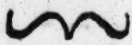
pathize with a Friend under Miseries, from which we are most secure, more than with an Enemy under as heavy Sufferings, which we had all the reason in the world to expect? The latter must work more strongly upon our Fear, and yet the former will raise a more lively Compassion. Besides, a just Humanity conciliates the Favour and Applause of Mankind; but Cowardice is not such a recommending Quality: on the other hand, it is despicable and mean in the eyes of all Men. From whence it is evident, that in the common Sense of Mankind, *Fear* and *Humanity* are by no means the same.

“BUT the weak and timorous are most “Compassionate.” — And where is the wonder, if they, who esteem the Evils of Life intolerable to themselves, consider them as grievous in the Case of others? In like manner, proud Men are most subject to Anger: Shall we therefore say, that Anger is nothing but Pride? Is not this to confound Things that are quite distinct, because they have some Connexion with each other? Nor is a *timid* always a *compassionate* Temper: For Cowards, we know, are often the most inhumane



SERM.

V.



humane Creatures. And if the timorous are sometimes prone to Pity; so also are the manly and brave. The noblest Natures, who can meet the Accidents of Life with undaunted Minds, often regard with a generous Compassion such as cannot bear them with the same Fortitude.

IT may appear from these Observations, that PITY is a *distinct Original Affection*, carrying us beyond ourselves, and consisting in real Sorrow for the Distresses of others, which is conceived purely upon this Account; because we apprehend them to be unhappy. GOD has implanted in our Nature this Principle of Compassion, to lessen the Calamities of human Life, by exciting Men to comfort and relieve each other under the various Evils of Mortality. Sometimes also it may be useful to prevent Misery, as well as to remove it: For, when a Man is prompted by Envy or Resentment to injure and abuse others, he may be restrained from the malicious Act, by considering, that those Misfortunes which he is going to bring upon them, will afterward be the Occasion of Uneasiness to himself, by exciting his Compassion. Thus he may check  
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## *Of Compassion.*

107

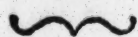
SERM.  
V.

an evil Disposition, the Indulgence of which would create Pain to himself, as well as Misery to others. Or suppose, he is so far hardened, as to be quite insusceptible of humane Sentiments; yet the Generality of Mankind, we know, are not. The more he oppresses the Sufferers, the more Assistance, he must be sensible, they are likely to meet with, not only from their Friends, but also from such as had little Regard for them, before their Distress had solicited Compassion: And the Reflection that the Pity of Spectators will incline them to succour the injured, and take their part against the Oppressor, may, and often does, deter him from those Acts of Injustice and Cruelty, to which his Inclination would otherwise lead him.

BUT the principal and most frequent Use of Compassion is to engage our Assistance in behalf of the Unfortunate. Among the numberless Evils, to which Man is exposed, there are many which his fellow Creatures are able to remove; and none, but what they have Power to alleviate by their Pity and Consolation. So that the Unhappiness of our State arises mostly from the want of a due Exertion of that Power, which Nature

SERM.

V.



ture has given us to help and comfort each other. But a regard to our own Interest and Ease, is apt to restrain us from yielding mutual Assistance, Few are possessed of so much calm good Nature, as would be sufficient of itself to conquer their Selfishness, and incline them to succour the wretched, when it cannot be done without some considerable Pains, Hazard or Expence to themselves. Our Benevolence needs to be enforced and aided by a stronger Principle, which may interest us more feelingly in the Sufferings of others, and carry us through the Hardship and Self-denial, we may be obliged to undergo, before we can relieve them. The Father of our Spirits has therefore endowed them with a sympathetick Tendernefs, which gives us a Share in the Sorrows of our fellow Creatures; and will not suffer us to be easy ourselves, so long as we observe them in any great Distress.

COMPASSION may justly be considered, as an *Advocate*, which God has provided in the Breast of Man, to plead with him the Cause of the Unhappy, to procure them Admittance into his Heart, to fix his Attention upon their Sufferings, and press him to exert



exert himself for their Deliverance. We may see then at once the importance of Pity in the Constitution of Man, and the Goodness of God in placing it there. As the Miseries of Life would be doubled, if there was no Humanity in the World; so if it was cherished as it ought, and exercised universally, more than half the Calamities that now exist, would be annihilated by it. What merciful Design does it manifest in the Author of our Being, that he has contrived this Mitigation for the Evils of Life, and thus lessened the Pain of Individuals by diffusing it around them? That he has alarmed and exhorted us, as a kind Father his Children, to relieve a distressed Brother, by giving us this friendly Sense of Sorrow?

SERM.

V.



WHEN we consider how very natural Sympathy is to Man, and what excellent purposes it is calculated to answer; we may be surprized, that any should recommend it to us as a point of Wisdom to extirpate our Compassion. It were not indeed so much to be wondered at, if only the Men of the World, who regard it as an Interruption to their Business or Pleasures, should persuade us to stifle it: Their Counsel would be suitable to their

SERM.

V.



their Principles, and perfectly consistent with their Character and Views. But that such Advice should have proceeded from a Set of Men, who exhort us earnestly to a Social Conduct, and assert with Zeal the cause of Virtue, is certainly somewhat extraordinary. They support it however with plausible Reasons, which perhaps it may be worth while to hear and examine.

“ You should be ready, says the *Stoic*, to  
 “ relieve the Miserable. Scarce any Duty you  
 “ owe to particular Persons is of more sacred  
 “ Obligation : But you should be moved to  
 “ it by a calm Benevolence, and a Sense of  
 “ Duty ; not by the Impulse of Compassi-  
 “ on : The latter being indulg’d may disturb  
 “ your Reason, as well as your Peace, and  
 “ disqualify you for assisting the Unfortu-  
 “ nate in the most effectual and prudent  
 “ Manner. If, through a Weakness com-  
 “ mon to human Nature, it will be any  
 “ Satisfaction to a distressed Friend to think  
 “ you commiserate his Case, you may as-  
 “ sume the Appearance of Compassion ; but  
 “ suffer not your Heart to be affected with  
 “ Sorrow ; thus you may gain the End of  
 “ Compassion, without the Danger: For  
 “ that

## Of Compassion.

III

SERM.

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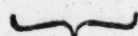
“ that some Danger attends it, whenever it  
“ prevails in a high Degree, is too plain to  
“ be denied. It may fill your Mind with  
“ the most exquisite Distress, and make you  
“ want Consolation yourself, when you  
“ ought to be employed in dispensing it to  
“ others. It may cause you totally to neg-  
“ lect your own Preservation, and thus ren-  
“ der you incapable of yielding the Wretch-  
“ ed any further Assistance; or instead of  
“ leading you to assist the Unhappy, it may  
“ tempt you to shun them, and betray you  
“ into a Conduct wrong in itself, and pre-  
“ judicial to those whom you pity. You  
“ may hurt others out of a Tenderness for  
“ them, and injure the Innocent by being  
“ merciful to the Guilty.

“ You will say perhaps, that some De-  
“ gree of it may be safe, though the Excess  
“ be dangerous. Let us know then, where  
“ you intend to stop. If your Friend meets  
“ with a Misfortune, you will pity him,  
“ but in a due Degree. Suppose then a *se-*  
“ *cond* and a *third* Misfortune befalls him,  
“ greater than the *first*. Must not the Oc-  
“ casion of Misery heighten your Sympa-  
“ thy, and carry you beyond the Bounds of  
“ Mode-



SERM.

V.



“ Moderation you had prescribed to your-  
 “ self? It is the same you will find in Pity,  
 “ as in other Passions; You may much more  
 “ easily prevent it’s Motion, than restrain  
 “ it’s Career. It is useful, we own, to the  
 “ bulk of Mankind, but only, as it supplies  
 “ the Want of better Principles. Cultivate  
 “ therefore those better Principles; be per-  
 “ fect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect,  
 “ who consults the good of all, unmoved by  
 “ any Passion. Study to acquire a mild, steady  
 “ Benevolence of Heart, which will carry  
 “ you through all Difficulties in discharg-  
 “ ing the Duties of a social Life; and dis-  
 “ pose you particularly, as far as you are able,  
 “ to ease the Pains and Sorrows of Man-  
 “ kind. Having attained this Perfection of  
 “ Goodness, you may lay aside Compassion  
 “ altogether; which, though it may be of  
 “ Use to strengthen a weaker Virtue, can be  
 “ serviceable in your Case, neither to your-  
 “ self, nor others.”

SUCH was the Advice of these Philoso-  
 phers, and such the Arguments with which  
 they supported it. None can blame me for  
 endeavouring to explain their Sentiments  
 fairly, who considers, how ill it becomes us

at

## *Of Compassion.*

113

SERM.

V.

at any Time, and most of all, when discouraging on the Subject of Humanity, to misrepresent the Opinions of Men (which, I wish I could say, has never been done) in order to expose them to Ridicule and Censure. Their Scheme however appears to me very exceptionable, not so much in regard of any mischievous Tendency, as because it is quite insignificant and trifling. “When you are perfectly Wise, say they, you ought to be free from Compassion;” but these very Men contend at the same time, that you never can arrive at the Perfection of Wisdom. Their Exhortations then amount at last only to this; If you can divest yourself of every undue Passion, both of the selfish and ill-natured kind; If you can throw off the Frailties incident to Man; If you can equal God in Rectitude and Benevolence, that is, if you can attain that Perfection, which you never can attain; you may and ought to extinguish your Compassion. What is this, but to trifle with us, under the pretence of instructing us? “But should we not aim at Perfection?” Doubtless we ought; but it must be such a Perfection,

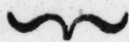
VOL. II.

I

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SERM.

V.



fection as our Nature will admit: For who can pursue what he despairs to attain?

THE *Stoic's* Instructions, however frivolous, may be harmless enough, when taken together; but many will take as much of your Advice as suits their Inclinations, and overlook the rest. Hence some, affecting to be Philosophers, and esteeming it a high Point of Wisdom to be void of Compassion, have set themselves to banish it from their Breasts: In the mean time they retained their Envy and Resentment, their Selfishness and Pride; and neglected to cherish that Benevolence of Temper, which alone can supply (if any thing can supply) the want of Compassion: They disdained to be merely *good Men*; they aspired to be *Angels*, or Gods; the Event was, they degenerated into Brutes.

In this and many other Cases, we shall be much more safe in listening to the Voice of Nature, than to the Dictates of a too refined and rigid Philosophy. While therefore we cultivate with all our Care the noblest Principles; as a Sense of Duty; an extensive Benevolence; a generous, calm Regard for the Welfare of Mankind; let us cherish also those *inferior* Affections, which  
hold



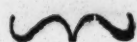
## *Of Compassion.*

115

hold to the side of Virtue, and are favorable to the Interest of human Society: Their united Force is often little enough to balance our Selfishness; so that if we dismiss Compassion, the rest may prove insufficient to carry us through the Duties of Humanity.

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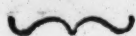
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THE Evils charged to the account of Compassion, arise only from its Excess, or from a Want of Prudence in the exercise of it. Now in the same way any of our Affections may become blameable, and the Cause of ill; a Consideration, that should indeed engage us to regulate, but not suppress them. If a human Creature appears to be void of Pity, or to possess it in such a low degree, that any trifling Expence or Trouble will restrain him from assisting a fellow Creature in Distress; we justly condemn the frame of his Mind as unnatural and wrong in every essential Part. That we may have too little Compassion will scarce be denied; and that, on the other hand, we may have too much, is equally manifest; though this perhaps is a less common, and if you will allow the expression, a more amiable Fault: Yet a Fault doubtless it is; when for Instance the Violence of his Pity confounds a Man's Reason,

SERM.

V.



son, or makes him entirely heedless of his own Preservation, in consequence of which he becomes incapable of assisting the Unfortunate.

THEY also must have, or would seem to have too much Tenderneſs, who cannot endure the Sight of Miſery; but turn away from it, when they ought to be employed in aſſiſting and comforting it. How directly is this to counteract the End, for which GOD has given us Compaſſion? He has endowed us with it, that we might be more powerfully inclined to relieve the diſtreſſed; but here it becomes the Occaſion, at leaſt the Pretence of with-holding Relief. Had all Men ſuch an extreme Delicacy; the wretched, and we ourſelves when of that Number, muſt be left to Perish alone for want of Aſſiſtance. We ſhould none of us deſire, I ſuppoſe, that our Friends ſhould have ſo much Concern for us, as to forſake us in our Miſery; No, rather let our Enemies thus pity us. Now, if this would be wrong in our Friends to us, it cannot be right in us to our Friends.

HUMANITY, when juſt and well-conducted, is one of the moſt lovely Diſpoſitions in the Heart of Man; but when it prevails beyond

## *Of Compassion.*

117

SERM.

V.

yond its due Proportion, or wants the Guidance of Discretion, it often does more harm than good; loseth its Beauty, and becomes contemptible. In all Cases we should make it an inviolable Rule, never to do an unrighteous thing; no not even from a Principle of Compassion. Thus if a Judge, moved with Pity, acquits a Villain against the Laws, and to the manifest Prejudice of human Society, such Mercy is vicious and criminal. In like manner, if a Person invades, by force or fraud, the Property of another, to support his Friend or Family in Distress, his Compassion will by no means sanctify his Injustice. Let us therefore be careful, that we so relieve the distressed as not to injure others, nor violate the common Rights of Mankind. It may be needless to add, what was hinted before, that we should not hurt others out of Tenderneſs for them; an Error which Parents often commit, when they will not suffer their Children to go through thoſe Hardſhips, that lie in the way to a happy Life.

WE ſhould alſo diligently uſe our Reaſon in conſidering, to what Perſons, by what

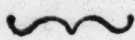
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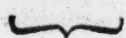
Means, and in what Manner, it will best become us to communicate Relief. A blind undistinguishing Charity deserves but little commendation: and though we should readily afford our Assistance to a Stranger, and even to an Enemy, when we see him in Distress; yet doubtless, if their Circumstances are alike, we ought to prefer an Acquaintance to a Stranger; a Friend to an indifferent Person; and above all, the Deserving to the Worthless. *Merit* and *Distress* constitute a double Claim to your Regard; the One demands your Pity, the Other your Esteem. Besides, by relieving a worthy Man, and helping him through the Difficulties of Life, you lay an Obligation upon Mankind, as well as upon himself. Whereas by giving to the Idle and Profligate, you nourish the Plagues of human Society; and perhaps your Bounty will answer no better purpose than to feed their Intemperance, or encourage them in Sloth. Ought we not then to pity the Wicked? Yes, and principally on account of their Wickedness, which is much worse than any outward Misfortune; we should also be ready to succour them in Extremity; but alas! we can do them but little

little Service, except we could deliver them from their Folly and Vice. We need not be so much at a loss for Objects, that we may be assured deserve our Bounty, as to pour it upon such as come in our way by Accident; of whom we either know nothing, or know that they are worthless. Good Men in Want and Affliction are not so rare in this World, but that upon a slight Enquiry we may find many more than we are able to relieve; though perhaps they will not be so forward as others to make known their Wants and solicit our Assistance. We should therefore make a proper Distinction, mindful, that the more we part with to the undeserving, the less will remain to discharge the Debts we owe to Innocence and Virtue.

THE means of Relief are as various as the Calamities of human Life: But Wealth commands them all; for, what a Man of Fortune cannot do himself, he can procure others to do for him in behalf of the miserable. It were therefore to be wish'd, either that all the Rich had Humanity, or that all Humane Persons had Riches. Not that you ought through excessive Bounty

SERM.

V.



to the Indigent to become one of them yourself, nor to exhaust the Fountain of Charity, by suffering it to flow in too plentiful Streams: But possibly this Caution might as well have been spared, for we are more apt to contract our Hands too close, than to open them too wide; and many are so fearful of giving too much, that they will give nothing.

OUR Friends may be visited with Afflictions, which we cannot remove; these we should endeavour to lessen by our Sympathy and Consolation. Next to effecting their Deliverance, we shall do them the greatest Service, if we can help them to bear Adversity with Patience and Chearfulness. It may administer something to their Comfort, if we only shew them we commiserate their Case, and share in their Sorrows. It is true, it argues a weak Mind to delight in being pitied; but it were barbarous to deny the wretched this Satisfaction: only we should be cautious, lest by an effeminate Sympathy we aggravate their Sorrow, instead of assuaging it, by teaching them to regard their Condition as worse than it is. If, says one, you would recover a Man, who is borne



## *Of Compassion.*

121

borne away by the Torrent of Sorrow, you must step into the Water yourself; but keep your footing and do not venture too far into the Stream, lest you also should be carried down by its Violence. He, that is unmoved with Passion, will have but little Influence upon the miserable; he that is overcome by it, will want Assistance and Comfort himself.

SERM.

V.



DIFFERENT Tempers require a different Treatment. Some love to be pitied; but a generous Spirit is mortified, when it finds itself regarded as an Object of Compassion. We should be tender of offending the Delicacy of noble Minds; and the same Humanity which moves us to supply them, should restrain us from upbraiding them with the Mention of their Wants. We should conceal that Pity, which prompts us to relieve them; and communicate our Favours as common Courtesies, or rather as Testimonies of the Regard we owe to their Merit.

THE principal Circumstances that enhance the Value of a Benefit, and make it more acceptable to the Receiver, are such as these; That it may be seasonable and speedy; That it prevents his Importunity, and exceeds his  
Ex-

SERM. Expectation; That it is bestowed with  
 V. Chearfulness and Freedom; That there is  
 ~~~~~ no Austerity; no Insolence; no Disdain; no-  
 thing in short, but what is obliging in your  
 Looks or Words: If it be honourable to  
 him, that it be conferr'd as publickly; if  
 not, as privately as may be. Lastly, That  
 it appear you were moved by pure good  
 Will, and not by Ostentation, or the pro-  
 spect of a Recompence.—Your own Dis-  
 cretion must guide you in the Application of  
 these Rules to particular Instances; a judi-  
 cious Observance of which, will render your  
 Humanity amiable to all Men, as well as  
 useful to the indigent and distressed.

HAVING thus described our Duty, I  
 should next have proceeded to lay before  
 you some Arguments, that should excite us  
 to practice it. But this, with what remains,  
 I shall reserve to, &c.



## S E R M O N VI.

### *MOTIVES* to C O M P A S S I O N.

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I P E T E R iii. Part of the 8th Verse.

*Having Compassion one of another,  
love as Brethren; be pitiful.*



N a former Discourse upon this Subject, I have considered the Nature, and the End of Compassion; the Degree wherein it ought to prevail, and the Rules we should observe in the Exercise of it. I would now lay before you some Arguments, that should excite us to cherish a compassionate Temper; and point out the means of attaining and improving it.

COM-



*Motives to Compassion.*

COMPASSION is recommended to us by its own *Amiableness*; by the *Satisfaction* that attends it in our own Minds; and by the *Interest* it gives us in the Affections of others. To be convinced of it's *Amiableness*, we need only recollect, in what manner we are moved, when it is represented to us in History, or Fiction: But especially, when we observe it displayed before us in real Life. If we know a Man, who deserves the Character of JOB; who *delivers the poor that cry, and the fatherless, and him that has none to help him; who draws upon himself the Blessing of him that is ready to perish, and causeth the Widow's Heart to sink for Joy; who is Eyes to the blind, Feet to the lame, and a Father to the indigent*; I say, when we see or hear of a person, to whom this Character may justly be applied, do not our Hearts burn within us with Admiration of his Virtue? It is true, if we saw him dispensing his Favours without any Discretion, his Folly would make him to appear pitiful and ridiculous, notwithstanding his Compassion: But a well conducted Humanity is universally admired,

Job xxix.  
12.—16.

*Motives to Compassion.*

125

mired, though so few of us practice what we all commend.

SERM.

VI.



SUCH is the lustre of a generous active Compassion, that it dazzleth our Eyes, and will scarce suffer us to discern the Imperfections that may be joined with it in the same Character. We love it with all its Faults; which, unless they are of a gross kind, we either cannot perceive, or are loth to condemn. A *Debauchee* of a merciful Disposition would generally be far more beloved, than a sober Man, who is insensible of Pity, and deaf to all the Cries of the distressed. So forcible are the Charms of this generous Tendernefs; which, when it is attended with Sobriety and Prudence, is still more engaging. In a Character, where all the Virtues are assembled, Humanity rivals the most eminent; and outshines others, which yet make no despicable Appearances. *Bounty*, for Instance, which implies a more promiscuous Distribution of Favours, is doubtless very commendable; but much inferior to *Compassion*, which singles out the Friendless; the Dejected; the Poor, the Afflicted; and

SERM. and becomes their Friend, because they are  
VI. unhappy.

SCARCE any thing is more honourable to human Nature, or affords a clearer Proof of it's Dignity, than this Tendernefs of Heart; by inspiring us with which, GOD has distinguished us from the Brutal Herd; and inclined us to feel and relieve each others Calamities. It is therefore something strange, how any should come to despise *Pity*, as the Passion only of weak Souls. If it was peculiar to such, I should not blush to be of the Number; and would engage never to envy, I hope I should rather pity, those, who, regarding Sympathy as a Weakness, have too successfully endeavored to banish it from their own Breasts. But, in fact, the bravest Minds are often remarkable for Mercy and Compassion; nor does Fortitude ever appear so admirable and illustrious, as when we see it at once unmoved by its own, but affected with Concern for the Sufferings of others. None but the Good are truly Great; and no Man is good, who is void of Humanity.

THAT



*Motives to Compassion.*

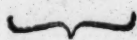
127

SERM.

VI.

THAT a just Compassion has a native Dignity in it, and ought therefore to be cherished by all of us, will perhaps be readily allowed: But we are apt to be prejudiced against it, on account of the Uneasiness to which it exposeth us. “Have we not Troubles enough of our own? Why then should we indulge an Affection, that will derive upon us the Miseries of others? Should we not rather break the Ties, by which Nature has endeavored to connect us with the Unfortunate? For where is the Prudence of adding to unavoidable Evils of Life, which are of themselves grievous enough, by sharing in the Sorrows of our Friends and Acquaintance?”——To this I answer; that Compassion may indeed sometimes subject us to very painful Impressions; but, if it riseth not beyond its due Proportion, the Satisfaction that flows from it, will more than repay us for the Uneasiness it creates: There is a Mixture of somewhat so agreeable in the tender Sensations of Humanity, as quite over-balanceth the Sorrows, which it brings upon us. The Mind is pleased with itself, for being touched in this  
generous

SERM. generous Way, and *enjoys*, if I may say so,  
VI. *it's own Pain.*



LET the Account be fairly stated, and you will find, you have no reason to quarrel with Nature for having made you, as well as others, susceptible of Compassion. If you have *on the one side*, the Pain of Pity; you have *on the other*, the Satisfaction of a Heart approving itself, and pleased with it's own becoming Affection. Besides, the same Goodness, which interests you in the Grievs of others, gives you also a Share in their Prosperity. It seems unjust, and scarce *possible*, that you should retain the pleasant, without the mournful Sympathy; and whatever may be thought of One, the Other is undoubtedly the Source of many pure and lively Joys. The Truth of it is, a good Man is happy in them both; he enjoys by Reflection all the good of all his Neighbours; and while his Heart is moved with Concern for their Sorrows, he feels a divine Pleasure far superior to all *their* Enjoyments, who having thrown off their fellow-feeling for others, are become insensible to every Delight, but such as are of a low and sordid Nature.

*Motives to Compassion.*

129

SERM.

VI.

AND as the inward Motions of Pity are attended with Satisfaction; so the Exercise of it in relieving the miserable, is one of the most delightful Employments in the world. A compassionate Man rejoices to see an afflicted Soul delivered from it's Burden by any means; but most of all, when he himself is concerned in accomplishing the happy Event. It yields him a noble Pleasure to think, he is procuring Ease to a distressed Heart, and rescuing a human Creature from the Pain of present, or the grievous Dread of impending Want. Each generous Act he performs, of this kind, will be a Source of Happiness to him in the Reflection; and administer to his Consolation, when he himself is visited with Misfortunes. Not the Miser in his Gold; nor the Sensualist in his most refined Indulgence; nor the Ambitious in all the Pomp of flourishing Greatness, has a Pleasure to be compared with that which a good Man derives from a charitable Action.

ESPECIALLY, if we add the merited Love and Respect of Mankind; a Reward, which Humanity always obtains, though never pursues it as a Principal End. A generous Dis-

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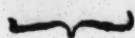
position

AND



SERM.

VI.



position to succour the distressed, manifesting itself by judicious Acts of Beneficence, attracts the Esteem of all; both of those, that are not, and of those that are relieved by it's aid. Spectators approve it, not only because it is amiable in itself, but also, because they consider it as a Refuge provided for them against those Calamities, from which they may be free at present, but which they know they are liable to suffer. And if it procures the good will of others, it kindles in the Hearts of those that feel it's Influence, a warm and lively Affection towards the Benefactor. When they can do no more, they love him; they bless him, and sometimes would be willing even to die for him.

It were certainly worth something, to be thus interested in the Affection of our fellow-Creatures; for besides, that Esteem is desirable in its own Nature, it recommends a Man strongly to the Pity and Assistance of others, when he falls into Adversity himself. Hence *Solomon* adviseth us, *Give a Portion to seven, and also to eight: for thou knowest not what Evil shall be upon the Earth.* As if he had said, Thou mayest at present live  
in

*Motives to Compassion.*

131

SERM.  
VI.

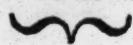
in Ease and Affluence; but such is the Instability of all human Things, thou knowest not how soon thy Condition may be altered: Providence may reduce thee as low, as him that now solicits thy Bounty; and involve thee in equal Calamities either of the same, or a different kind. Thou mayest be sunk into those depths of Misery, from whence nothing can redeem thee, but the compassionate Aid of thy fellow-Creatures. Exert therefore that Humanity now, to which thou mayest hereafter be obliged to fly for Succour and Relief. Make thyself Friends by a liberal Use of thy Fortune; that if this should forsake thee, those may remain: Thus thou mayest provide thyself a Refuge against the Evils that may be concealed in the womb of Futurity; Thou wilt be prepared for the worst that may happen; and if thou never shouldst want the good Offices of others; the Gratitude and Blessings of those whom thou obligeest, will heighten the Enjoyment of thy prosperous Fortune.

“ But many, we find, are ungrateful; and  
“ may not this justly discourage our Bounty?”

A common Complaint this, which at the

SRRM.

VI.



same time, that it charges the Party obliged with detestable Baseness, reflects a little upon the Benefactor himself. It looks, as if his Generosity and Compassion would not have engaged him to bestow, had they not been assisted by the hope of Acknowledgments. It is also an implicit Confession of his own Imprudence in the Choice of Objects: For if he had dispensed his Favours to worthy Men, they would not have furnished him with this Excuse for restraining his Benefit. We should either therefore aspire to that Generosity of Soul, which is content to do good without the prospect of a Return; or direct our Charity to generous Minds, who will not fail in grateful Resentments. “*But many confer their Benefits upon the worthless;*” (which would be less blameable, if their Charity might not have been better applied) But herein, at least, they are chargeable with Folly: they confer Benefits upon Men, who have no Principles of Honour and Goodness, and then complain of them, because they are ungrateful. Just as if you should sow in the Sand, and murmur that you have not a plentiful Harvest.

WE



*Motives to Compassion.*

133

SERM.

VI.

WE should also meet with more Gratitude, as well as do more good with the same Expence, if in our Distributions we were more careful to prefer the distressed to the fortunate; studying rather to relieve Want, than add to Plenty; and to ease the wretched, than to furnish new Delights for those who are already at Ease. You entertain well, suppose, a Man of Fortune; and pray where is the mighty Obligation you lay upon him? He enjoys, it may be, a trifling Pleasure for an Hour or two, which he would have past as easily, if not as agreeably elsewhere. Besides, he has reason to think you expect a Return of Entertainment or Service: So that, if he is really grateful, he must either have but little Discernment, or an Abundance of Generosity. Whereas if the same Expence had been laid out with Discretion in relieving an honest Family in Distress, what an important Service had you done them? How sensibly would they have felt the Obligation? They would readily have acquitted you of selfish Views, and conceived towards you the most sincere and lasting Gratitude.

K 3

I AM



I AM sensible how opposite this Advice is to the Maxims of the World. But the World, that is, the Generality of Men, defeat even their own Ends by their foolish Maxims. They seek to gain Friends by their Bounty, but take such wrong Measures that they gain none ; and finding themselves at last disappointed in their Aim, they repent of their Liberality ; and rail at Mankind for being so wise, as to see through and frustrate their Views. Despise therefore the Maxims of the World, and listen rather to the Voice of GOD and the Dictates of Humanity. When you see a good Man in Distress, hasten to his Relief ; comfort him in Adversity ; encourage him by your Praise ; countenance him by your Recommendation ; supply his Wants, and assist him in struggling through the Difficulties of Life. By this means you will fix a Friend for Life, in whose Love and Gratitude you may securely confide in all Revolutions of Time and Fortune.

THUS we have considered Humanity, as it is amiable in itself ; as it is a Source of inward Satisfaction ; and as it tends to conciliate the affectionate Regard of our fellow-Creatures.

## Motives to Compassion.

135

Creatures. *Christianity* furnisheth us with additional Motives to cultivate and exercise a compassionate Temper. It exhorts us, to

SERM.  
VI.

*put on BOWELS of Mercy and Kindness; to*

Col. iii.

*weep with them that weep; to comfort the de-*

12.

Rom. xii.

*jected; to shew Mercy with Chearfulness; and*

8, 13, 15.

*distribute to the necessities of good Men. It*

condemns, as destitute of all Goodness, the

*Man, that having the World's Good, and see-*

*ing his Brother in Want, shutteth up his Bow-*

*els of Compassion from him. Our Blessed SA-*

John

iii. 17.

*VIOUR, by his Example, by his Precepts,*

and by the Sanctions of his Religion, has re-

commended to us in the strongest Manner a

merciful Disposition. This divine Person

*wept, we find, with his mourning Friends, and*

John xi.

was frequently moved with Compassion for

35.

the Miseries of Mankind: Indeed what else

was it, that brought him down from Hea-

ven, to suffer the Evils of this mortal Life?

What was his most constant Employment,

while he staid on Earth, but to free Men

from the greatest Calamities; to cure the

Disorders of their Bodies, and the Vices of

their Minds? His Instructions breathe the

same humane Spirit, which animated his

Life. He has taught us to bestow our Boun-



SERM.

VI.

Luke x.

30.—37.

ty, not upon our wealthy Relations, Friends, and Neighbours; but upon *the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind*. What a beautiful Picture has he drawn of Humanity in the Character of the good *Samaritan*; which he has brightened by the Shade of an opposite Temper in the *Priest* and *Levite*; shewing us by this lively Representation, that we ought not to confine our Charity within the narrow Circle of our Friends and Acquaintance; But that, if we see a Man in Distress, though he be a Stranger, of a Nation and Religion at variance with our own, we should be ready to relieve him.— Upon the whole, therefore, it is evident, that as Compassion is most suitable to the Nature of a Man, so it is most essential to the Character of a Christian.

THE Gospel abounds with Promises of glorious Rewards to the Charitable and Compassionate. It assures us, that *they, who have shewn Mercy to Men, shall obtain Mercy from Almighty God*; And that, *if we give to those, who are incapable of recompensing us, we shall be amply recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just*. In the Account, which our SAVIOUR has given us of the Proceedings

Luke xiv.

14.

*Motives to Compassion.*

137

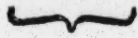
SERM.

VI.

ings and Issues of the future Judgment, he has represented this, as the grand point upon which all depends; whether *we have, or have not ministred to the necessities of our fellow-Creatures. If we have not, we shall go away into everlasting Punishment; if we have, into Life eternal.*

HAVING thus laid before you the Arguments that should engage us to cultivate a Habit of Humanity; it remains, that we consider by what Methods we may attain or improve it: For unless we can acquire it, what can it avail us to be convinced of it's Excellence? Indeed if there be a Man, to whom Nature has originally given no such Affection as Pity, I do not see how he should possibly acquire it by any Art or Endeavours of his own. But Nature has done her Part: She has implanted in the Hearts of all Men a Principle of Compassion, though in different Degrees of Strength; and this Difference is made more considerable by the various Methods, that are used in their Education. In some the Seeds of Humanity are stifled betimes, through the Neglect of those, whose Duty it was to have assisted their Growth. They are suffered to take  
an

SERM.  
VI.



an unnatural Pleasure in the Torture of Animals, which at first was owing to mere Inattention, and might then have been easily corrected, but grows at last into a downright Barbarity of Temper. They are also indulged, it may be encouraged, in treating their Inferiors of Mankind with Insolence and Contempt, as if they were Creatures of a different kind, that have no Likeness or Relation to themselves. The Man that instills into his Child such Sentiments as these, is in a hopeful Way to be the Father of a Brute.

WHEN our Parents and Tutors have done with us, we come next under the Discipline of the World; which does its best to extinguish the Remains of Compassion, by inculcating upon us the *Maxims of Selfishness*; as, that *Pity is a Weakness of Nature*; that *it is foolish to interest ourselves so deeply in the Concerns of the Unfortunate*; that *our principal aim should be to get, and save*; and if we must needs be giving, that *we should give to those that may be serviceable to us*. These are the reigning Politics of the Multitude, which we must either approve, or we shall be ridiculed as Idiots that know nothing of the World. And it is well if we  
can



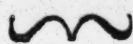
## Motives to Compassion.

139

can bear to be thus tutored, without suffering in the Humanity of our Tempers.

SERM.  
VI.

WE may gather from hence, that with regard to Compassion, much depends upon *Nature, Education, and the Companions of our Lives*; to which we may add, *upon the Colour of our Fortune*; for Affliction softens the Heart, and makes it susceptible of humane Impressions; whereas they, who have suffered but little themselves, are seldom remarkable for Tenderness to others. These things promote Compassion; but some of them wholly, others in part are out of our Power. But there are certain exercises of Thought and Reflection, to which we may apply at our Pleasure; and which, if we habituate ourselves to them, will be apt to cherish within us a Disposition to Humanity. We should often consider Mankind in the most engaging Light, as Children of our Father, partaking of the same Nature with ourselves, having the like Flesh and Blood, the like Reason, Sense, and Affections. In these Relations we stand to every human Creature, whom we see involved in Calamity and Distress. We should be cautious of entertaining a Prejudice against any of our Fellow-



Fellow-Creatures, because they may differ from us in Religious Opinions. For thus Superstition has taught Men, not only to deny the unhappy the Offices of Kindness; but in their Zeal for God, to treat each other with the most horrid Barbarity. That our Religion therefore may promote, instead of impairing our Sense of Compassion, we should learn to regard all Men as the *Offspring of God*, who prefers Mercy to Sacrifice, and is never so well pleased with us, as when he sees us relieving his distressed Children.

IT will also be of Service, if we keep in Mind the common Condition of Mortals. We are all sailing upon the Sea of Life, exposed to the Storms and Billows of Adversity, which beat now upon one, then upon another. At present perhaps, we are pursuing our Course with a prosperous Gale, while others are exercised with severe Hardships. But this Tranquility is by no means likely to last long. It is probable our own turn will shortly come, to be harrassed by a Storm, or to strike upon one of the numberless Rocks that are concealed below the deceitful Surface. God knows how soon the same Affliction

### *Motives to Compassion.*

141

SERM.

VI.



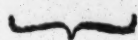
fiction our Neighbour suffers, or some heavier Calamity may fall to our Share. Is he tortured with Pain? *We ourselves are also in the Body.* Is he mourning the loss of a Friend? Our Friends are also Mortal. Is he reduced in his Circumstances? And have not many, whose Fortunes once seemed as secure as our own, lived to suffer the Extremities of Want? Such Meditations would help to give us a lively Sense of the Miseries of others, and dispose us to relieve them.

WHEN we see a Man in any particular Distress, we should attend to his Case, and not stupidly overlook the Circumstances that heighten his Affliction. We should represent it to ourselves in all its Aggravations; and weigh the Sorrow, the Fear, the Anguish of Heart, which a human Creature in that Condition must probably undergo. If he is indigent, for instance, his Concern upon his own Account may be nothing in Comparison to the tender Anxiety he feels, on the account of his Family, who daily suffer before his Eyes the Hardships of Poverty. We should imagine ourselves in his Place, and think after what manner we should be affected in such a Situation. Or if we have here-



SERM.

VI.



heretofore passed through the like Trials, we should call to mind how grievous they seemed, how difficult we found it to endure them with Patience. — “*No, you are certain you could easily go through as much, or more.*” — But if it should please God to bring you to the Trial, you would perhaps see reason to alter your Opinion; for those Afflictions which are tolerable in the *Idea*, are often grievous enough in the *Sufferance*. You may have indeed a more firm, shall I say, or more invincible Mind than others. But supposing it is true Fortitude of Soul, that you are provided with such excellent Armour against the Assaults of Adversity, is your Happiness; but no reason why you should not commiserate a weaker Nature. Your Compassion will prove your Fortitude to be genuine; as it will shew you are not insensible of human Ills, though you are superior to them by means of the Vigour and Constancy of your Mind.

IF the Sufferer is a person of worth and Virtue, a Reflection upon his good Qualities will strengthen our Compassion; we should remember how innocent, how generous he has been, how ready to pity and assist others  
in

*Motives to Compassion.*

143

SERM.

VI.

in their Distress. If he is vicious, and has brought himself into Trouble by his own Fault; we should consider that still he is a Man: that his Guilt is the worst part of his Wretchedness, and ought therefore itself to move our Compassion more than Want, Infamy, Death, or any outward Calamities it can bring upon him. Yet some how, in these cases, Resentment is apt to get the better of our Pity: Upon which Account we should be tender in judging the Characters of the Unfortunate. They may have some Faults, but small ones, and such as we ought to overlook on account of their Virtues: They might have escaped their Misfortunes, if they had behaved with more Prudence. But perhaps it was only some slight Indiscretion that occasioned their Misery, or a want of that foresight which is scarce to be expected from human Imperfection. A candid Mind will be ingenious at finding out these Extenuations. Others, on the contrary, are no less ingenious at blackening the Characters of unhappy Men. Some look upon Affliction itself as an Argument of Guilt in the Sufferer, and a Mark of the Divine Displeasure towards him. A senseless and barbarous Notion,

*Motives to Compassion.*

Notion, which we ought to reject with Disdain ; because it would lead us to hate those Men, and feel a sort of Complacency in their Sufferings, whom Nature is calling upon us to pity and comfort.

It is of great Moment to the Growth of Humanity, that we endeavour to subdue every Passion which is opposite to it, and which would either keep it from rising, or hinder it from producing its proper Effects ; such as Malice and Pride, Envy and Resentment. If we could entirely subdue these ill-natured Affections, our social Dispositions being freed from their Antagonists, would more easily obtain their due Power and Authority in our Minds. We should also banish Indolence, which is loth to have its Calm puffed by the Alarms of Pity, or to be at any Pains in relieving the Distressed : But among all the Enemies to Compassion, there is none more inveterate than Avarice : This sordid Temper, which is wholly intent upon getting and saving, and has no regard to any thing but Gain, begets an impenetrable Hardness of Heart, which is proof against the most piercing Cries and Aspects of Misery. We must therefore extirpate Covetousness, or it will make us incapable



### *Motives to Compassion.*

145

SERM.  
VI.

capable of conceiving a generous Thought, and restrain us from all the offices of Humanity. — Thus, as in cultivating the Earth we destroy the Weeds, that the Fruits may flourish; so in cultivating the Mind, we should be careful to root out bad Principles, that the Virtues may grow up to Maturity and Perfection.

I SHALL add only one *Direction*, which is useful in the attainment of other Virtues, as well as of Humanity; we should *frequently indulge it*, and exercise ourselves in those Works of Beneficence, to which it exalteth us. Habits of every kind are gained and confirmed by repeated Acts. And if you accustom yourself to indulge a generous Inclination, you will find such a Pleasure, such a calm, lively, growing Pleasure, both in doing humane Actions and in reflecting upon them afterwards, that a Miser will not be better pleased with an Opportunity of Gain, than you with that of relieving a miserable Object.



## S E R M O N VII.

The NATURE and proper OBJECTS  
of LIBERALITY.

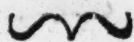
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LUKE XIV. 12, 13, 14.

*Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a Dinner, or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a Recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a Feast, call the Poor and Maimed, the Lame, the Blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.*



OUR blessed Saviour made it the business of his Life to do good. And since the greatest Service one Man can do to another, is to improve his Mind by  
useful



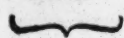
useful Discourse, he almost constantly applied himself to promote, after this manner, the Interest of those that conversed with him. When the People gathered in Crowds about him, he dealt among them, not Gold and Silver; but spiritual and divine Truths: a far more excellent kind of Charity. And when he was engaged in more private Company, he turned the Conversation upon important Subjects, and managed it to the Advantage of those that were present. He frequently borrowed Hints from the most trifling Accidents, and converted them into Affairs of moment, by making them the Occasions of conveying to others some just and useful Sentiments. His Instructions were open and free to Men of all Conditions; and scarce ever did any one hear him speak, but he was, or might have been the wiser for what he heard.

THESE Observations are abundantly verified by a great many Passages of our Saviour's History; and, among the rest, by the account we have in this Chapter of what passed at the Feast to which he was invited by one of the principal Pharisees. Here we



SERM.

VII.



find him furnishing the best part of the Entertainment, and rewarding the Bounty of the Master of the Feast by his excellent Conversation. Hereby teaching us, that when a Number of *rational* Creatures meet together, they should not, like *Brutes*, be wholly taken up in attending to their Food, and pampering their Bodies; but should also study at once to please and profit each other by a friendly Intercourse of Sentiments and Reason.

DISCOURSE indeed, of one kind or other, is seldom wanting; but of that which tends to render Men wise and good, there is a wonderful Scarcity. In this, as in other respects, it were well if we could better imitate the Example of Christ. His Table-talk was not about the Affairs and Conduct of absent Persons; but about those things which it more nearly concerns every Man to know, and of which it is shameful to be ignorant: Such as, *how to behave decently in Society*, and *who are the most proper Objects of our Liberality and Beneficence*. When he observed that some of the Guests ambitiously chose the most honourable Seats, he tacitly reprov-

*Objects of Liberality.*

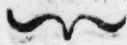
149

SERM.

VII.

reproved them, by recommending that Modesty and Deference to others, which, in all the Intercourse of Life, is the surest Guard of Equity and Justice. Having thus mildly checked their Insolence, he addresses himself, in the words of our Text, to the Master of the Feast; *Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a Dinner, or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a Recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a Feast, call the Poor and Maimed, the Lame, the Blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompenced at the Resurrection of the Just.* Or as it should rather have been translated, *Call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy Neighbours, who are rich.*

THIS Advice may be of use to some, who, though they want neither Means nor Inclination to be liberal; yet forfeit the Praise due to that Virtue, through a defect of Judgment in the disposal of their Favours. They would fain be generous; but being ignorant



*when, or to whom, or in what Manner, or Proportion* it is best to communicate; they are not so much to be commended for giving, as blamed for giving foolishly and wrong. One material Question then upon this Subject, is, Who are the most proper Objects of our private Liberality? Why, perhaps, in the *first* place, our *Relations* and *Benefactors*. Afterwards we should pay the highest Regard to *those who are the best*, and to every one in *proportion to his personal Merit*. But how shall we proceed, when all other Considerations are equal in Persons of different Fortunes? For instance, if we have a rich Relation and a poor one; if we have two Neighbours equally honest, the one affluent, the other in needy Circumstances: Upon which of them had we better bestow what we have to lay out in Acts of Beneficence? You see on which side our Saviour determines; and I shall endeavour to justify and recommend to you the Advice he gives.

AND, *First*, if in the Exercise of Liberality you chiefly intend what you ought, namely, *to do good*, the Case will be easily decided beyond Dispute: for it is plain the  
same

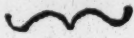


*Objects of Liberality.*

151

SERM.

VII.



same thing, which being given to a rich Man will contribute little or nothing to his Happiness, may be very serviceable to one of low Condition. The value of a Present, which would be of no Advantage to a Gentleman, and which you could scarcely offer him without some Degree of Shame, would comfortably maintain an indigent Family for a considerable Time. By spending on the Great, how do you profit them? Are they Men of corrupt Manners? Your Substance is worse than lost in feeding and strengthening their Vices. Are they proud? You cherish their Vanity. Are they debauched? You minister to their Luxury. And suppose they are temperate and good, you only add to their numberless Superfluities; and give them what for certain they do not want, and what in all probability they as little desire. On the other hand, how many, and what valuable Ends may be answered, by a judicious Distribution of Bounty to your necessitous Neighbours? You may feed the hungry, clothe the naked, encourage the despairing, rescue them from the Pains of present, and from the grievous Fears of impending want;



and raise those above Temptations, who would prefer their Innocence to any thing but their Lives.

COULD you fully represent to yourselves the Anxiety of an honest Man, doubtful about his own and his Family's Subsistence; and the Joy, that runs through the little Society on the Receipt of a seasonable unexpected Supply, I doubt not your own Humanity would plead with you effectually for them; for Nature has implanted in the Hearts of all the Seeds of Compassion: which though they are sometimes stifled by meaner Principles, so as scarcely to appear, yet seldom do they fail of producing some good Effect, when we can prevail upon ourselves to pay a proper Attention to the Miseries of others. For what End were we made thus sensibly to feel the Distress of our Fellow-Creatures? Wherefore are we more powerfully inclined to condole with the unhappy, than to rejoice with the fortunate? Is it not the Voice of God and Nature, plainly requiring that we should remove Want, rather than add to Plenty; and endeavour to ease the wretched, before we attempt to serve those who are already at ease?

To

*Objects of Liberality;*

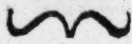
153

SERM.  
VII.

To benefit or please a wealthy and an indigent Person in equal Degrees, you will find the Difficulty and Expence you must be at widely different; and this Consideration may have its weight with those who are able to resist more generous motives. To make use of the Instance suggested in the Text, when you entertain your Superiors, extraordinary Preparations are made, which in Delicacy or Cost may bear some proportion to their Dignity; and, after all, it is odds your Feast will be but indifferently relished, because their common Meals are as good, or better, according to the Sense in which these Words are frequently used. But if you invite your Inferiors to partake only of the *usual* Provision of your Table, this will be a *Feast* to them. They will also esteem themselves honoured by you; whereas the former will think they do you Honour, even by barely dispensing with the best Entertainment you can furnish.

Thus, in giving to the Rich you may spend *much*, and contribute *little* to their Advantage or Pleasure; in giving to the Poor you may *serve* them much, while you spend *little*.



*The Nature and proper*

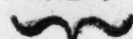
*little.* But perhaps you are not concerned about the Expence, and never grudge what you pay for being liberal. I presume however, you would place your Favours where they will be gratefully received: and I never yet heard it asserted, that the Rich in general are more disposed to Gratitude than the Poor, nor is it likely they should. For in the FIRST PLACE, their Wants (of *outward* things I mean) are few and small, and commonly they affect to have them thought less than they are. Wherefore they receive a Favour unwillingly, and are apt to undervalue it. For the most part they are loth to own themselves obliged, especially to their Inferiors; because this would be an implicit Confession of Want, which they mortally hate to make. On the contrary, the Poor frankly acknowledge their Necessities, and are forward to magnify the Bounty that supplies them. The deeper sense Men have of your Benefits, the stronger will be their Gratitude. Now what is bestowed on the indigent, is sensibly felt, and makes a powerful and lasting Impression: But what you lay out on the wealthy, if at all considered,

## *Objects of Liberality.*

155

SERM.

VII.

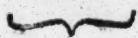


is soon forgotten, being swallowed up and lost in their abundance.

GIVE something to an Inferior, he will esteem himself honoured, as well as profited; and by how much you exceed him in Rank, by so much will he raise your Benefit the higher. But a Superior will imagine he honours you, when he accepts your Offerings; and will perhaps account your Kindness to him in giving, less than his to you in graciously condescending to receive your Gifts. Besides, he may reasonably suspect you looked wholly at his Fortune, and were moved to serve him, not by any real Regard for him, but by the *Prospect of a Recompence* more than equivalent: And that Suspicion of such mean Designs in you, must very much weaken, if not intirely prevent his Gratitude towards you. But the Man of low Fortune will readily acquit you of selfish Views; and knowing you respect himself more than his Circumstances, he is the more likely to be grateful; at least, he will study to be thought so, not only by you, from whom he has received a Benefit, but also by all who are capable of doing him one. It should

SERM.

VII.



should seem therefore to have been the Intention of Providence, that, in all the Ranks of human Life, *Bounty should flow down from the higher to the lower, and Gratitude ascend in Return*; so that he who attempts to invert this Rule, violates the Order of Nature, and may come in the End to have his Labour for his Pains. For *neither can Bounty rise upwards, nor Gratitude for it be made to descend*, with any propriety, or steady continuance,

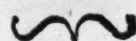
WOULD you gain Reputation by your Liberality? place it on the modest, deserving Poor. Thus you will be commended by Men of Sense, and reap the Applause of a judicious Choice, as well as of a truly generous Disposition. Moreover, the Regard to what you do to a great Man, at best, is confined to himself, or his Family; while perhaps your Inferiors reproach you for it. But what you do to a Man of an humble Fortune, (provided he be a worthy Man) is praised by the Good universally; and, in a particular Manner, procures you the Affection of all the honest among the lower sort, which is no inconsiderable Body of Men. As there-



## Objects of Liberality.

157

SERM.  
VII.

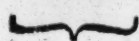


therefore you can scarcely give a more unquestionable Proof of real Merit, than by supporting and relieving virtuous Poverty; so hardly by any other Means can you more effectually raise and secure to yourself a good Character in the World.

PERHAPS you may think it most prudent to be liberal, where you expect a Return; lest your Fortune should be impaired, and the Source of Liberality by degrees exhausted. But you will please to observe, we are not now considering *how much* you had best to give; but *to whom* you should give, what your Inclination and Circumstances will suffer you to part with. It were Madness, without question, by excessive Bounty to the Poor, to become one of them yourself: But that you may possibly give them *too much*, will neither justify you in not giving them *any thing*, nor in bestowing on the Rich what you can afford to bestow. However, if you conduct your Affairs with moderate Prudence, I hope you will have no reason to fear those bad Consequences, with respect to your Fortune, which you would seem to apprehend: For I do not remember to have

SERM.

VII.



heard of any Persons, whose Charity has made them Beggars. Whereas commerce with the Great, and a regular exchange of Prodigality and Luxury with them, has reduced many a flourishing Family, and often sunk the most plentiful Fortunes. It is this kind of Liberality that endangers your Circumstances, pouring out profusely on your Superiors in costly Gifts and Entertainments. Yet was there any real Merit in it, I should not have been so forward in advising you to count the Expences; but, alas! there is none at all. It is so far from being truly commendable, that it cannot refute the charge of Guilt. For while you thus give, where, and in such proportions as you ought not, you render yourself the less able to give where you ought. In truth you steal from your indigent Friends and Neighbours, to throw it away on those who want nothing.

PRIDE, rank PRIDE lies at the bottom. It is Pride kindles the vain Affection of Wealth, and those fond Desires of appearing to be in Favour with the Great, which have betrayed numbers into a reproachful Poverty. Guide then the Streams of your Bounty into  
a bet-

## *Objects of Liberality.*

159

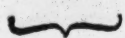
SERM.  
VII.

a better and safer Channel. Suffer not the Fountain to be drained by an imprudent and criminal Waste. Indulge less to luxurious Pleasures; resolve to waste less Wealth on your Superiors for the best of Ends, *viz.* that when the pressing Necessities of any good Man or Friend call for a Supply, you may not have the Grief to find yourself unable to relieve them.

THERE is one *Objection* however to this Advice, which deserves to be considered, because it may create some Perplexity in honest Minds; for since we are most of us obliged to one or other of our Superiors, it may be asked, Whether we had not better lay out what we can spare in Acknowledgments to them, than in Charity to our Inferiors? Here *Gratitude* seems to invite us one way, and *Humanity* another; and it is hard to deny either of such fair Solicitors. Let us therefore see if we cannot reconcile their Demands, and contrive to satisfy them both at once. As to the Favours we receive from our Superiors, it were well if we could make them full Returns without omitting more important Duties: But if this cannot be done, we must



SERM.  
VII.



must be content to give, and they to accept such acknowledgments as may serve for Testimonies of a grateful Heart. They cannot justly insist upon equivalent Returns; if they do, they in a great Measure dissolve our Obligations to them; for the more they expect us to pay for their Favours, the less do we owe. We are under Obligations of Gratitude to none, except so far as they have exercised towards us disinterested Generosity. Now a truly generous Man, like GOD, will take Pleasure in seeing us do good to others, and account it as done to himself; and had much rather excuse us from returning his Favours, that we may have wherewith to answer the Demands of others upon us; than, by insisting strictly upon Returns, disable us for the Offices of Humanity and Goodness towards our Inferiors.

“YET who would not prefer the fortunate  
“ before the indigent? When from the former one may expect a valuable Recommendation, and scarcely any at all from the latter?” But let us examine the Truth of these Assertions. You think, perhaps, you may expect Returns from the Great, but in what Circum-

Circumstances, I beseech you, and upon what Terms? Why, truly, provided you are yet in a Condition to give, you may hope to <sup>see</sup> ~~re~~ve. Whilst Fortune continues to smile upon you, the Rich also, whom you have obliged, will deign to smile. They will make you the kindest Returns for your Favours, as long as you do not want them: But should you at any time be overtaken by Necessity, have a care lest they leave you to shift for yourself. In such Distress the Poor, who had heretofore enjoyed your Bounty, will not fail to pity you, and lament your Misfortunes. If you ask, *what Good this will do you?* It will do you more good than the shy looks and distant Carriage of your Superiors, who before had deceived you into a Confidence of their Friendship.

BUT even if a Man was above all possibility of Want, to despise the hearty Blessings and Prayers of his grateful Inferiors, would argue him below all sense of Humanity. It is not therefore altogether true, that we have no room to expect any Returns from the Poor: For if they can requite us with nothing else, they can with Gratitude; which

SERM.  
VII.  


pays *by owing*, and still owes after it has paid, at once indebted and discharged. And though an indigent Person cannot make you a full and immediate Return, yet it may fall in his way to perform many little Services for you, the Value of which is very much enhanced by his ingenious Manner of doing them; by the Willingness of his Mind, and the Modesty with which he commonly extenuates them. Besides, amidst the endless Changes and Revolutions of human things, God only knows what you may come to want, or what the very lowest of the Poor may have to bestow hereafter. Providence, for the wisest Ends, delights in raising the Humble, and pulling down the Exalted; that by taking notice of such Events, the one may be preserved from Insolence, and the other from Despair. It is possible therefore you may need his Assistance before you die. Supply then his Necessities now, that he may readily supply yours, if that should ever happen.

BUT you flatter yourself this shall never happen, and are desirous to know where you must seek a Recompence for your Bounty? Now,  
in



### *Objects of Liberality.*

163

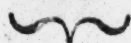
SERM.

VII.

in the *first* Place, if *by being recompensed*, you mean, receiving as much Money or worldly Substance as you part with ; and if the Prospect of this be your only Motive in distributing ; you actually do not deserve, and cannot surely have the Face to claim any Reward ; for in this there is not the least real Bounty or Merit : you are only trying to force a Trade, and practising a low Selfishness, which you would fain pass upon the World for Generosity. But if *by Recompence* you mean, what Advantage or Pleasure shall you gain by being liberal to an indigent Man ? I answer, you will have obliged a Fellow-Creature, and secured his good Will and best Wishes : You will have the Pleasure of seeing Wretchedness removed, Nakedness clothed, Hunger satisfied, Sickness cherished, a human Heart that was afflicted, made easy and joyful by your Means ; at least, you will have the Pleasure of indulging and giving scope to a generous Inclination : and, which is the Crown of all, you will feel in the Act the Divine Satisfaction of doing well, and afterwards of being conscious that you have done so. Are these small con-

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temptible



temptible Rewards? “*Mere Trifles, says the Man of the World, I want something that may be felt and seen.*” Alas! the Man of the World cannot judge of the Value of these things, because he is an intire Stranger to them. I speak therefore at present to those only, who have the natural Sentiments and Affections of Men. And such Persons want no Arguments of mine to convince them, that the generous Pleasures which are conceived in the Mind, and approved by the Heart, are no less real and valuable, than the Satisfaction arising from the solid Possessions of Bags and Money.

WHATEVER your present Notion of things are, the Hour is coming, and will soon be here, when you will esteem that Money to have been laid out in the wisest Manner, which, with truly christian and charitable Intentions, you have imployed in Acts of Mercy and Beneficence. When your Eyes are closing upon the Vanities of the World, and your Mind is divided between the Thoughts of the *past*, and the Prospect of the *future* Life, it will avail you nothing what you possessed, or what you have enjoyed. It is not,  
*seriously*

## *Objects of Liberality.*

165

SERM.  
VII.

*seriously it is not* full Coffers, or a large Estate, it is neither a Review of past Luxuries, nor of the splendid Entertainments you have exchanged with the Rich, that can support and comfort your dying Soul. Nothing but the Consciousness that you have spent your Life in unfeigned Endeavours to do good, and in wisely improving the Talents committed by Heaven to your Management, can enable you to enter the Valley of Death without Horror, or to look through it with Confidence to that righteous Tribunal at which you must appear.

IF you consult the Scripture, the only authentic Account of the future Judgment and World, you will scarce find any Reward promised to those that bestow their Liberality on the Rich. No, from them they expected a Recompence, and from them they must receive it, or not at all. On the other hand, as the sacred Writings always make Mercy to the indigent an essential part of a pious and good Man's Character; so they abound with Promises of *heavenly* Rewards to this Virtue; not without severe Threatnings against the Neglect of it. Let me therefore

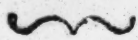
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SERM.

VII.



persuade you to begin the Practice of relieving, without Noise and Ostentation, the Necessities of your honest Friends and Neighbours; or if you have already begun, persist in it a while, and in the End you shall be crowned with a glorious Reward; you shall receive a Reward from the universal Judge in the Presence of Men and Angels; a Reward too great to be compared with any thing on Earth. A Reward which you cannot lose by Death or Accidents, and which will neither corrupt with Time, nor end with Years.

I SHALL conclude with our Saviour's Account of the Proceedings and Issues of the future Judgment, Matt. xxv. 31, &c. which, whosoever reads and heartily believes, can never want Arguments to succour the Distressed: When the SON OF MAN *shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his Glory. And before him shall be gathered all Nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats: And he shall set the Sheep on his right Hand, but the Goats on the Left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right Hand, Come,*

## Objects of Liberality.

167

SERM.

VII.

*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in Prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the Righteous answer him, saying, Lord; when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee Drink? When saw we thee a Stranger, and took thee in? or Naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in Prison, and came unto thee. And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left Hand, Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in: Naked, and ye clothed me not: Sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when*

M 4

saw

SERM.  
VII.

*saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a Stranger, or Naked, or Sick, or in Prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.*



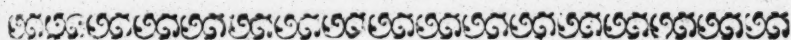
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## S E R M O N   V I I I .

### O F   H U M I L I T Y .



I PETER. V. 5.   Middle Clause.

*And be clothed with Humility.*



N Discourſing upon this Subject I ſhall purſue the following Method : *First*, I ſhall endeavor to explain the Nature of HUMILITY. *Secondly*, I ſhall lay before you ſome Arguments to cultivate this Virtue. And, *Laſtly*, Point out the way to attain it.

HUMILITY, is the *Mean* between Pride, and Abjeſtneſs of Mind. A proud Man thinks too highly ; an abjeſt Man too meanly ; But a humble Man juſtly, concerning him-

SERM. himself and what belongs to him. But  
 VIII. those Virtues that are situate between two  
 ~~~~~ Extremes, have often a nearer Resemblance  
 to the one, than to the other of them.  
 Thus, Liberality lies between Profuseness  
 and Avarice; and yet it seems to be more  
 distant from Avarice, than from Profuseness.  
 In like manner though Humility is the  
*Mean* between Pride and Abjection of  
 Mind; yet Abjection, somehow, seems to  
 approach nearer to Humility than Pride  
 does. Hence we frequently call the *profuse*,  
 Liberal, and the *mean-spirited*, Humble;  
 but we scarce ever call the *covetous*, Liberal,  
 or the *proud*, Humble: Yet Humility is  
 quite different from *Mean-spiritedness*, and  
 very consistent with true *Magnanimity*; for  
 as it is not the property of a great Mind to  
 think too highly of itself; so neither of an  
 humble Mind to value itself below it's just  
 and real Worth.

WE should be careful to avoid each of  
 these Errors; keeping as far from *Mean-*  
*spiritedness*, on the one hand, as from *Pride*  
 on the other. But whereas most Men are  
 apt to exceed, rather than fall short in their  
 Senti-

## Of Humility.

171

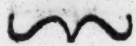
SERM.  
VIII.

Sentiments concerning themselves, we should guard most carefully against that *Extreme*, to which our Nature is most inclined. A humble Man will be cautious of overlooking his Defects, and of magnifying his Virtues to himself; afraid lest the Prejudices that cleave to Self-love, should betray him into a vain Opinion of his own Excellence.

WE may be humble and proud with regard to a Variety of Objects, with regard to *external* things, as Birth; Fortune; Dress; or bodily Advantages, as Beauty and Strength; or *intellectual* and *moral Endowments*, as Wit, Knowledge, and Virtue. Hence it is very possible we may be proud in some Things, at the same time that we are humble in others. We may be humble with regard to outward Appearance, when we are proud of our Sense and Religious Improvements. Nay, we may be humble in all other respects, but proud of *appearing* humble and modest.

HUMILITY requires, that we neither value ourselves highly on account of outward Advantages, nor over-rate any real Excellence, of which, we are possessed.





fed. It implies, not only, that we form a just and moderate Estimation of our own Merit; but also, that we do not prefer ourselves unreasonably to others. Many will confess their own Imperfections, without reluctance, who yet, when Comparisons are formed, cannot see, or will not own, that any body is equal or superior to themselves. Here then is the great Tryal, the best Touch-stone of true Humility; when it compares itself to others, it will do Justice to their Merit, as well as to it's own; and assume to itself no Pre-eminence over them, without just Grounds. I say, *without just Grounds*; for Humility does not oblige a Man, right or wrong, to give every body else the Preference to himself. This indeed is quite impossible. A Man, that has made some considerable Advances in Knowledge, cannot believe himself inferior, in that respect, to the ignorant Multitude; nor the virtuous Man, that he is not so good as those, whose Lives are manifestly vicious and irregular. It is true, St. *Paul* directs, *Ph. ii. 3.* that *every Man esteem others better than himself*: But the most this can signify is, that a Man should rather be partial to other Men's

## Of Humility.

173

SERM.

VIII.

Men's Virtues, than his own, and more favourable to their Failings; that, where the odds are not considerable, his Humility should turn the Balance on their side; or perhaps the Precept does not so much regard the *inward Act* of Esteem, as the Modesty and Condescension of our Behaviour towards them.

HUMILITY then implies in it these two things; that we entertain a just and moderate Opinion of ourselves, and that we do not prefer ourselves unreasonably to others. As it consists in the Sentiments and Disposition of the Mind, it is plain, it must be competent to all Ranks and Conditions of Life. Indeed, Greatness is apt to beget Pride; and Adversity a humble Mind; but there is no necessary connection between these things: For Humility is often wanting in a low and depressed Fortune, and sometimes found in Persons that live in Magnificence and Splendor. It may subsist equally in a fine House, or a mean Cottage; under a costly Robe, or a threadbare Coat.

THIS Virtue expresseth itself in a Variety of ways; in our Appearance, Discourse and Behaviour to others: I might have added

in

SERM.  
VIII.

Prov.  
xxx. 13.

in our Looks and Countenance ; for no Affections are more visible there, than Pride and Humility. There is a Generation, says Solomon, *O how lofty are their Eyes ! and their Eye-lids are lifted up ;* and I suppose, every body has observed the Difference between a modest, and supercilious Air. Not that these things are infallible Indications of the inward Temper : For a proud Man may easily put on the *Air* of Humility ; and Nature may have given such a cast to the Countenance of a humble Man, as proceeds in others from Haughtiness of Spirit.

WITH regard to the Figure a Man makes in the World, Pride has two Ways of expressing itself : The one high and Natural ; the other low and Affected : The one by an extravagant Ostentation of Wealth and Splendor ; the other by pretending to despise all Magnificence, and courting the Fame of Humility, by the Meanness and Singularity of its Appearance. Thus a certain Philosopher once encountering some, that were dressed better than became them ; see, said he, what Pride is here ! Afterwards observing others in mean and fordid Habits below their Rank ; this too, said he, is Pride, but  
of



## *Of Humility.*

175

SERM.

VIII.

of a different Sort ; though indeed he himself was deservedly rebuked for this latter kind of Pride, which he so justly censured in others : For meeting by chance one of his Acquaintance in a handsome Dress, he rudely takes his Mantle from his Shoulder, and tramples it in the Dirt, with these words, " Thus I trample upon your Pride." " Yes," replied the other, And with a greater " Pride of thy own." To the same purpose a wise Man observed of one, that affected a mean Habit, " that any Body might discern his Vanity through the Rents in " his Coat."

WHAT has been said of Dress, may be applied to a Man's House ; Furniture ; and the whole Figure he makes. With regard to every thing of this nature, Humility will teach us to be neither curious, nor negligent ; avoiding with equal care a vain Excess, and a mean Affectation. It requires, that our Appearance be moderate, and suitable to our Rank and Fortune. The humble Man will consider his Age ; his Abilities ; his Character ; his Function ; and avoid whatever any of these would render indecent. He will observe such a Moderation,

as

SERM.

VIII.

as will shew, that he neither values himself, nor expects to be valued by others for these foreign Ornaments ; nor will he despise Merit, because it wants them.

IN Conversation, the humble Man is not suddenly silent and reserved out of Contempt of the Company ; not talkative from a high Opinion of his own Sense : not so abject as to flatter others, nor so vain, as to love they should flatter him ; not obstinate in defending his Opinions, nor forward to impose them, nor loth to acknowledge his Mistakes. He learns willingly ; teaches without any assuming Airs ; receives Admonition, or gives it, with equal Mildness and good Nature. He will not talk much of himself, nor sound his own Praise ; much less will he assume to himself the Merit that is due to another. Yet Humility does not oblige us to speak of ourselves with Contempt. It is nothing but a ridiculous Affectation, when a Man says in his own Dispraise, such things, as others believe, or he himself knows, to be false. And what most betrays the Affectation is, the manifest Disappointment of those Persons, that most love to run themselves down, when others do not contradict them :

## *Of Humility.*

177

them: A plain sign, that their Censures of themselves, are only so many Baits to catch the Applause of others.

SERM.  
VIII.

AND as Humility is not apt to commend itself, so neither to reflect upon others. It is not uneasy to hear them applauded; and if it censures their Conduct, it is with some good Intention, and not from any Pleasure it takes, in being censorious. Humility in it's very Nature is repugnant to Envy; for we envy those most, who are possessed of Advantages, which, we think, we deserve better than they. So that he who is not apt to prefer himself before others, (which is the Character of a humble Man) will upon that account be the less subject to envy them. Nor will he be prone to Resentment; for it is a high opinion of ourselves, which gives the edge to Affronts, and magnifies in our esteem the Injuries we receive: wherefore true Humility is always attended with Meekness.

It will also shew itself in the Modesty of our Pursuits. It teacheth us to be content with the lot Heaven has assigned us, without murmuring, as if we did not think it so good as we deserve. A humble Man

VOL. II.

N

has



SERM.

VIII.

has no ambitious desires of Honour and Distinction, and is not fond of Titles and Precedence. If he does not meet with any extraordinary Respect, he can still maintain his good Humour; and does not quarrel with the World, as though it did not pay him the regard due to his Merit. He aims not at things above his Abilities; prefers a good to a great Name; and could be content to spend his Days his Obscurity: Not that he will decline an honourable Station, in which he is qualified for being useful to Mankind; but he will not seek it so much for the Dignity that attends it, as for the Opportunity it may give him to serve his Generation: And if Providence calls him to a lower Employment, he disdains it not, but cheerfully pursues it.

BUT never is Humility seen in a clearer Light, never does it make a more engaging Appearance, than in a Man's Treatment of others in the several Stations and Relations of Life; in the exchange of Benefits; and in his Behaviour to his Superiors, Inferiors, and Equals. If a proud Man does you a Favour, he commonly renders it, not only unacceptable, but odious by his Insolence.

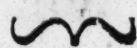
First,

## *Of Humility.*

179

SERM.

VIII.



First, by his arrogant Air and Expressions, at the time of bestowing it; and afterwards, by frequently reminding both you and others of the Benefit he has conferred upon you. He treats you as one, whom he has made his Slave; and expects so much Gratitude and Acknowledgment from you, that he really deserves none at all. But the humble Man doubles the Kindness he does you, by the Gracefulness of his Manner. You see no supercilious Airs; you hear no insolent Words; he studies rather to extenuate, than magnify the Benefit: He treats you with no less, if not with greater Deference after than before; lest you should imagine he claims any Superiority over you on the score of the Kindnesses you have received from him. He boasts not to others of the Obligation he has laid upon you, nor upbraids you with it; but leaves you to remember or forget, to publish or conceal it, as you are Grateful or not.

SUCH is the Difference between Pride and Humility, in bestowing Favours. Let us next consider it in the Case *of receiving them*.

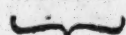
A proud Man hates to be obliged; he accepts a Benefit with a fullen Disdain; and

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SERM.

VIII.



seems displeased, that you should have had it in your Power to do him a Kindness. He is loth to acknowledge it, and soon loses the remembrance of what is so disagreeable and mortifying to him. Besides, he is apt to be ungrateful upon this further account; he thinks every thing is due to his Merit; and therefore whatever Service you do him, he regards it as a *Debt* you were bound in Justice to pay: and commonly he is not so much pleased with what you have done for him, as disobliged, that your Favours were not proportioned to that Desert which he fancies in himself. On the contrary, a humble Man, as he entertains no extravagant opinions of his own Dignity, readily imputes, the Service you do to him, to your own Generosity and good Will. He is willing to be, and to own himself obliged; loves the Sight of his Benefactor; and suffers not any ambitious desire of greater Favours to stifle his Gratitude for those he has received.

WITH regard to our Superiors, Humility requires, that we do not affect an Equality with them; nor press upon their Rank; nor think ourselves ill used, if they do not treat



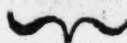
## Of Humility.

181

SERM.  
VIII.

us with extraordinary Condescension. That we neither thrust ourselves forwardly upon, nor shun them, out of an affected Contempt, or an envious Uneasiness to see others excel us. If they are placed above us in civil Stations, we should chearfully submit to their Authority; and pay them all that Regard which is due, though not perhaps to their personal Character, yet to the Dignity with which the Laws have invested them. A Superiority also in point of Fortune, when it is not sullied with vile and profligate Manners, justly demands from us a respectful Behaviour. And as to such as *outshine us in Wisdom and Virtue*, Humility will teach us not to envy and detract from their Merit; but to rejoice in their Advantages, and honour them in full proportion to their Excellence. Thus the humble Person entertains a becoming Deference for his Superiors; which will shew itself, not in sordid Flattery, and mean Compliances, but in the ingenuous expressions of a just and manly Respect.

TOWARDS *our Equals*, Humility requires that we carry it as *Equals*, in a friendly obliging

SERM.  
VIII.

obliging Manner, free from all Affectation of Superiority and Pre-eminence.

LASTLY, *with respect to our Inferiors*, Humility will teach us to avoid all Insolence of Behaviour; and abstain from whatever looks like Unmercifulness and Oppression. A humble Man will not vaunt himself in his Superiority over others; he will shrink down, as it were, to a Level with his Inferiors; and study rather to conceal, than display those Advantages, the sight of which would answer no other End, but to put them out of conceit with themselves and their own Condition. In a *civil Station*, he will not indeed prostitute the Dignity of his Office by mean Condescensions; but he will conduct himself with such Moderation, as may shew he challenges Respect, not so much to his Person as to his Place and Character. If he *excels you in Sense and Virtue*, instead of making his good Qualities a reason for treating you with Contempt, he regards them only as so many Obligations upon himself to be serviceable to you. He instructs with Mildness, and reproves with Gentleness and Simplicity; not upbrading you with your Defects.

## Of Humility.

183

SERM.  
VIII.

fects, nor setting off his own superior Wisdom.

HE esteems no mortal below his Regard, because Heaven has placed him in a lower Rank. On the contrary, he makes every Man, whom Vice and Guilt has not debased, his *Brother* and his *Equal*, as far as is consistent with the necessary Distinctions of human Society. Hence he is Affable, easy of Access, Courteous and Condescending. The Ambitious indeed will be all this to gain Favour and Applause; but the humble Man upon different Principles. His good Nature, and not his Vanity, leads him to take notice of his Inferiors; he observes, they are pleased with such Condescensions; and the Meanness of their Fortunes will not prevent him from performing those Offices, by which he can give them an innocent Pleasure, or do them a real Service.

AFTER this manner does Humility express itself with regard to Mankind. If we consider it *with relation to the DIVINE BEING*, it implies, that we be duly sensible of the immense Distance between God and us; of his infinite Perfection, and our own Nothingness, in comparison of him: It will



SERM.

VIII.



teach us to adore him in all Lowliness of Mind; and ever to esteem the Favours we receive from him, greater, and the Afflictions less, than our own Desert. It requires, that we submit chearfully to his Commands, and embrace with entire Satisfaction whatever he sees good to order concerning us; in all things making his Will our own: persuaded, that he is fitter to choose our Circumstances for us, than we for ourselves. In *short*, that we behave towards him in all respects, as one that is infinitely superior to us in every kind of Perfection.

THUS I have endeavoured to explain the Nature of Humility, and described it at large in its Properties and Effects. And from the whole it appears, that Humility is not, as some may conceive, a low and despicable Qualification. One would think indeed no Mortal could regard it in this light, who had not first mistaken its Nature; for what can be more becoming a rational Being, than to make a just Estimation of itself and its Endowments? What more worthy of a Man, than to maintain a supreme Deference to the best and greatest of Beings, who infinitely excels him; and a humane Regard  
to

## *Of Humility.*

185

to his Fellow-Creatures, in the several Ranks which Providence assigns them? What, on the contrary, could be more dishonourable, than to be puffed up with a groundless opinion of our own Merit, which betrays itself in a haughty ungenerous Behaviour? The truth of it is, Humility, not only is consistent with real Greatness of Mind, but a Qualification, without which, all Pretensions to true Magnanimity are false and groundless.

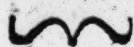
SERM.

VIII.



FROM what has been said concerning the Nature of Humility, we may learn; *First*, Not to condemn others for the want of it, without good Reason. Uncharitable Censures of this kind are but too common in the World. Some will reflect upon you, as haughty and supercilious, merely because Nature may have given such a cast to your Countenance, as may sometimes proceed from Insolence of Temper. Others will condemn you as Proud, because you will not indulge their Vanity, by meanly flattering and fawning upon them. And there are many, who seem to think every Man is Proud, that makes a better Appearance, and lives in a more splendid manner than themselves; though only in proportion to his own

SERM.  
VIII.



own Fortune. But such things as these may very possibly consist with true Humility; and are not half such certain Indications of a proud Heart, as to be censorious upon others on account of them. A humble Man will be ready to suspect his own Heart, if he finds such Marks of Pride upon himself; but not so apt to censure others, in whom he observes them, because in that Case they must be to him doubtful and ambiguous.

FROM what has been said we may learn also in the *second* place, what Improvements we ourselves have made in Humility. To satisfy me, I am possessed of this excellent Virtue, it is not enough that I speak modestly of myself, and choose to be plain in my outward Appearance; for this I may do from the Pride of my Heart, in order to gain the reputation of Humility: But do I value myself highly, and expect to be admired by others on the account of any outward Circumstances? Do I fairly estimate my own Worth, and not lightly think myself wiser and better than my Neighbours? Am I warm in my Resentments; or envious toward such as are preferred before me? Do I desire that Men should treat me with un-

common



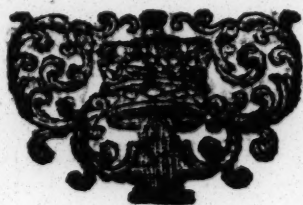
## Of Humility.

187

SERM.

VIII.

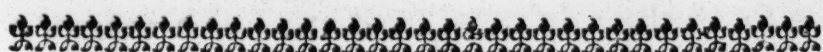
common Respect ; or am I vexed and disappointed, when they do not ? Am not I loth to allow others their due Praise, and pleased when I hear myself unjustly commended ? In the Commerce of Life, am I not apt to think my Friends more obliged to me, than I am to them ? Am I willing to pay all due Honour to my Superiors, without being uneasy if they do not treat me with extraordinary Condescension ? Do I assume no Pre-eminence over my Equals ? Am I courteous, equitable and merciful to all my Inferiors ?—When you can do all this, *without being too proud of it*, you may reasonably hope, you are not altogether void of Humility.



S E R.



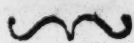
S E R M O N IX.  
*MOTIVES* to H U M I L I T Y.



I P E T E R V. 5. middle Clause.  
— *And be clothed with Humility.*—



N a former Discourse upon this Subject I endeavoured to explain the *Nature of Humility*, that we might learn not to mistake it in ourselves or others. It now follows, in the *second Place*, that I lay before you some *Arguments* to cultivate this Virtue. —And what should principally recommend it to us, is, *the Amiableness of it*; which may appear, in some measure, from the foregoing Description. If there are any, who regard it as a low Qualification, we must in Charity suppose, that this is chiefly owing to their ignorance



norance of it's Nature: They call *Mean-spiritedness* Humility; and then despise the *Name*, while they cannot but approve and esteem the *Thing itself*: for what can be more becoming us, than to make a just and moderate Estimation of ourselves and our Endowments? What more laudable than to be free from Insolence and Vanity, than to be modest in our Appearance, Pursuits, Discourse, and Behaviour? What more worthy of a Man, than to entertain a supreme deference for the Wisest and Best of BEINGS, who infinitely excels him! and a humane Regard for all his Fellow-Creatures, in the several ranks which Providence assigns them?

IF such be the Nature of Humility, it cannot but appear highly honourable to every one that has any tolerable Sense of what is excellent and praise-worthy. It does not indeed make such a dazling Shew as some other Virtues, which look somewhat suspicious, because they seem to court Observation; but to a discerning Eye, it appears no less engaging and beautiful, even one of the most lovely accomplishments of human Minds.



SERM.

IX.

Minds. Other Virtues lose much of their Splendor, when they are not attended with Humility. Pride tarnishes the best Actions and the noblest Endowments; but Humility adds fresh Lustre to a Man's good Qualities, and makes him derive Honour and Dignity from his very Defects. Hence we may see the propriety of the *Apostle's* Expression, when he directs that we *be clothed with Humility*; intimating, that as we study to make the Body decent by outward Dress, so we should be careful to adorn the Mind with the inward Habit of Humility; with *the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit*: in comparison of which all outward Ornaments, such as *wearing of Gold, and putting on of Apparel*, are trivial and contemptible.

AND as Humility is amiable in itself, so it is also very beneficial in its Effects: It will contribute not a little to the Peace and Chearfulness of our Minds, to which there is no greater Enemy than Pride. A proud Man burns continually with ambitious Desires, and is ever anxious to gain Honour and Admiration. He expects the World should regard him according to the Figure he makes

*Motives to Humility.*

191

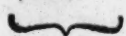
SERM.  
IX.

makes in his own Eyes; and when some through Wisdom, others out of Malice, deny him that Respect which he arrogates to himself, he is soundly mortified. If therefore we would not be devoured by Fretfulness and Spleen, we had best not to entertain extravagant Ideas of our own Merit, nor insist upon more Reverence from the World than it is willing to pay. True contentment dwells with Humility, and cannot subsist without it. He that is possessed of this Virtue will be little concerned about the Appearance he makes in the World, and therefore he can be easy and satisfied in a low Condition. He is not ambitious of being honoured and observed; and if Mankind think proper to deny him their Respect, this is no Disappointment to him; let them even use their pleasure, he can still enjoy himself and be chearful.

In the next place, *Humility is advantageous with regard to a Man's Fortune.* Not that it will render him meanly saving; but it will restrain him from living above his Income, and wasting his Substance in Pomp and Prodigality. It will also teach him not

SERM.

IX.



to disdain any just and lawful Employment, by which he may support himself, and advance his Fortune. But there are different Advantages arising from Humility, according to the various Objects upon which it is exercised. If we are humble *with regard to our Appearance*, we shall be content to want a thousand expensive Articles, and escape a heavy Tax, which the Vanity of others imposeth upon them. If *we entertain a modest Opinion of our Knowledge and Virtue*, we are in the best Disposition for improving them by our own Study, and the Assistance of others. If *we are humble in our Behaviour to our Fellow-Creatures*, we shall scarce fail of winning their Love and Respect.

To the generality of Mankind there is no Vice more offensive than Pride; no Virtue more engaging than Humility. Those that want the Favour of the People as a Step to their own Advancement, are commonly sensible of this; and therefore, upon occasions, when it concerns them to be popular, they can vouchsafe to dissemble their usual Insolence, and assume the most charming Airs of Courtesy and Condescension. To be  
further

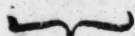


further convinced how apt Humility is to conciliate good-will, we need only attend to the common People, when they are praising their greatest Favourites: Such an one, they say, is *a humble Man*, or *he has no Pride in him*. This is often the *First*, and, in their Opinion, the *highest* Commendation. And indeed I believe they only speak what others think; for every man loves Humility in his neighbour. But it is surprizing that, in the common course of Life, we should be so careless of recommending ourselves to others, by that which never fails to recommend others so powerfully to us.

WITHOUT Humility, *Friendship* cannot well be formed, nor subsist with any tolerable Steadiness. Pride is apt to slight and overlook its Friends; on which side soever it lies, it aggravates an Affront, and makes even Favours odious in the sense of those that receive them; and if Honour is proposed, it will abuse and trample upon its best Friends, in order to come at it. Hence Competition, Jealousy, Contention, the entire Dissolution of Love, which is commonly succeeded by irreconcilable Animosity. Besides, true Friendship is of so delicate a

SERM.

IX.



Nature, that it *cannot walk but upon even Ground*; he therefore, that will always affect a Superiority, either upon account of Rank, Fortune, Merit, or Obligations, will meet with hearty and constant Esteem from few of his Acquaintance. Such a one may have plenty of Slaves and Parasites from among the Dregs of Mankind; but he will have the mortification to see the men of Worth and Sense declining his Friendship, which is not to be had but upon servile conditions. If we think to enter into a thorough Friendship with any Man, we must place ourselves entirely upon a Level with him, and claim no Mastery over him upon any account; or else our Friendship will be of no long Continuance, unless he be a servile, mean-spirited Person.

AND as the Virtue I am now recommending, is quite necessary to the stricter Intimacies of private Friendship, so *it is of great force to procure us the good-will of our Acquaintance in general.*

TRUE Humility, in which there is nothing abject, slavish, or fawning, wins upon all Observers; and especially upon those to whom it is exercised. If we are courteous  
and

*Motives to Humility.*

195

SERM.  
IX.

and obliging to our *Equals*, we shall gain their Friendship; our *Superiors* will give us their Favour, in return for our Respect; and our *Inferiors* their Respect, in return for our Favour. But if the Haughtiness of our Minds will not suffer us to comply with these terms, we shall assuredly want the Esteem of our Fellow-Creatures; which, if we despise at present, we may wish hereafter we had taken more Pains to secure it. I own, it is mean to make the good Report and Affection of Mankind our principal End; but to neglect it altogether is no sign either of Prudence or Virtue.

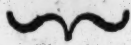
HUMILITY is not only beloved of Men, but (which is a much more important Consideration) it is an *Ornament of great price, in the sight of Almighty GOD*. With this argument the *Apostle* enforceth the Exhortation in my text; and *be clothed with Humility; for GOD resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble*. This should engage us, not merely to counterfeit the outward Appearance of Humility, which can be of no Service to us with regard to GOD; but to cherish this virtue in our own Hearts, which lie constantly open to Inspection. To

James iv.  
6.



SERM.

IX.



Isai. lvii.

15.

encourage us herein, *the high and lofty One, who inhabits Eternity, and dwells in the high and holy Place*; even HE has declared, that *with that Man also will HE dwell, who is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the Humble, and to revive the Heart of the Contrite ones.*

Luk. xviii.

10—14.

CHRISTIANITY also lays us under very strong Obligations to cultivate a humble Disposition. The great Author of it was himself a noble Pattern of Humility; and it is hard to say, whether he has recommended this Virtue more powerfully to us by his *own Example*, or by the *Precepts* he has left us: But both conspire to place it in the most engaging Light, and press it upon us in the strongest Manner. In his Parable of the *Pharisee* and the *Publican*, how amiable does Humility appear in the one? *Who, standing afar off, and not lifting up so much as his Eyes unto Heaven, smote upon his Breast, and said, GOD be merciful unto me, a Sinner!* Especially when compared with the Pride of the *Pharisee*, who stood boasting of his Merit to his Maker, and confidently preferring himself before his Fellow-Creature. Again, when his *Disciples* were contending for Pre-eminence,

## Motives to Humility.

197

SERM.

IX.

eminence, JESUS called a little CHILD unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, *Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted from this Spirit of Ambition, and become as humble as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Our Saviour did not teach what he did not practise: He condescended even to wash the Feet of his Disciples, with this particular View, that he might teach us by his Example to be humble in our Behaviour towards one another. *Ye call me,* says he, MASTER and LORD, and ye say well; for so I am: *If I then, your LORD and MASTER, have washed your Feet, ye ought also to wash one another's Feet: For I have given you an Example, that ye should do as I have done unto you.* But indeed the whole Life of CHRIST, was one continued Lesson of Humility; and certainly in those, who profess to be Followers of the meek and lowly JESUS, nothing can be more indecent than Pride; nothing more becoming than Lowliness of Mind.

Mat. xviii.

1-4.

John xiii.

4-15.

IN the GOSPEL, no Virtue has more frequent Promises made to it of a glorious Reward, than Humility. *Blessed are the poor in Spirit,* says our SAVIOUR, *for theirs is the*

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King-

SERM.

IX.

Mat. v. 3.

*Kingdom of Heaven.* By which we are not to understand, that one single Virtue will qualify us for Heaven; but Humility is so closely connected with the other Virtues, and leads so necessarily to them, that where this prevails in full Perfection, the rest cannot be wanting. A Man, that is thoroughly humble, will of course be submissive to God, and obedient to his Commands; he will be sober, mild, equitable, and merciful: and whoever is thus humble is truly blessed; because he is entitled to the Happiness of God's heavenly Kingdom. One would think it might persuade us all to lay aside Insolence and Pride, and aspire after unfeigned Humility in Heart and Life, when we are assured from the greatest Authority, that the Time will shortly come, when *he that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

Luke xiv.

11.

I PROCEED now, in the *third* and *last* place, to point out the Method we should take, in order to attain this excellent Virtue. The great Point is, to know ourselves; and from a just Estimation of our own Worth, that we neither swell with Vanity, nor sink into Mean-spiritedness. And the way to know this,  
is

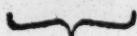


is to *study* ourselves with Impartiality and Diligence, to examine our Conduct, to descend into our Hearts, and search narrowly those hidden Recesses, into which none can enter besides God and *us*. But we are most of us apt to exceed, rather than to fall short in our Sentiments concerning ourselves; and we should guard with the greatest Caution against that Error, to which our Nature is most inclined.

SERM.  
IX.

THAT we may be humble *with regard to our Sense and Virtue*, we should frequently attend to the Mistakes we have been guilty of, to the blindness of our Minds, and the Faults and Errors we are every day committing. We should consider well, how often perverse Dispositions prevail in our Hearts, and betray us into Indecencies of Discourse and Behaviour; how weak we find our good Resolutions, how easy to be overcome by a pressing Temptation, and what a great Mixture of Selfishness and Vanity there commonly is in those Actions for which Men commend us, and for which we are apt to applaud ourselves: We should pursue these Exercises with the utmost Ingenuity and Care, afraid lest our Hearts should deceive

SERM. us into a vain Opinion of our own Excellence.  
IX.



James i.  
17.

WHATEVER good Qualities we may possess, we should be mindful from whence they were derived to us: Perhaps we had never attained them, had it not been for the Instructions and Counsels of our Fellow-Creatures. — Be that as it will, it is certain, the little Excellence we have, *descended from above, from the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect Gift.* We have no good which he has not wrought in us; we have done no good which he did not give us the Power to perform. In short, we can boast of nothing but what we have received, of nothing but what ought to remind us of our Dependence and Obligations. Every Degree of Grace, every valuable Endowment we owe to the free Goodness of God, who bestowed them upon us; not to fill us with Vanity, but that with them we should glorify his Name, and serve our Generation.

If we accustom ourselves to these Reflections, they may keep us from being proud of our Virtue and religious Improvements. *With regard to Rank and Fortune* we should consider, that these things do not render any

Man

Man a whit the more excellent; that they are frequently enjoyed by the vilest of Mankind; that Wealth is precarious; and that Death will soon put an End to all outward Distinctions. *Nor shall we be lifted up at the thought of a little Fame and Reputation*, if we reflect, that this depends upon the Opinions of Men, than which, the Winds are not more uncertain; that they, who commend us, know in comparison but little of us; and that both we, who are praised, and they who praise us, must soon die and sink into Oblivion. *As to Advantages of Body, such as Beauty and Strength*, we should remember, that a *Flower* excels us in the one, and a *Brute* in the other; and that a Fit of Sickness may, or else Age and Death certainly will deprive us of them both. And indeed with regard to all *outward things*, if we are duly sensible how mean they are in their own Nature, how liable to Change, Decay, and Corruption, how precarious and short in their Continuance, we shall be ashamed to value ourselves highly upon them. Our Pride is wholly owing to our Stupidity and Ignorance; and, in proportion as we improve  
in

SERM.

IX.





SERM.  
IX.

in good Sense, we shall also improve in Low-  
liness of Mind.

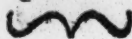
BUT it is not enough that we entertain a moderate opinion of ourselves; for, to complete the character of Humility, it is also required that we do Justice to others, when we consider ourselves in comparison with them. In order to attain this branch of Humility, we should often call to mind in how many respects we agree with the rest of Mankind. *We are all the Offspring of one and the same Parent, partake of the same Nature, have the like Flesh and Blood; the like Reason, Sense, and Affections, and are equally subject to Accidents and Death. And shall we despise any human Creature, who resembles us so nearly; who is of the same Family with ourselves, and whom Nature has placed upon a level with us in so many important respects? Again, in those Instances wherein we differ from our Fellow-Creatures, we should be careful not to overlook their Merit, and our own Defects; nor to magnify their Defects, and our own Merit. Is your Fortune superior to your Neighbour's? But then does not he excel you in Sense*  
and

and Discretion? You think you are a wiser Man than he; not to say, you *judge* in your own *Cause*, perhaps you are inferior to him in Humility and Virtue: He has some Faults, from which you are free; and is not he free from some Faults, of which you are guilty? Your Friends have given you some Cause to be displeased; and do you think your Friends have not many Things to excuse in you? You have laid them under great Obligations; but possibly they have performed Services for you of equal Importance, or would have done so, had it been in their Power. If, laying aside all foolish Prepossessions in our own Favour, we could learn to weigh these things in the fair and equal balance of Reason, it might go a great way towards curing us of our Insolence, and forming in us the habits of Humility.

WHEN our Observation is confined to such as are below us, we are apt to swell with Vanity and Pride; but it will help to check this humour, if we turn our Eyes now and then towards those that excel us, and compare ourselves impartially with them. If I am superior to some of my Fellow-Creatures,  
there

SERM.

IX.



are others as much superior to me in the same respects. And it is plain, whatever Treatment I may reasonably desire from those above me, the same I owe to such as are below me. There is therefore a good deal of Sense in what is commonly said, that *we should go out into the World, in order that we may learn to know ourselves.* For though it may seem somewhat odd, that a Man should go abroad to get acquainted with himself; yet if no Man truly knows himself, who is not free from Arrogance and Vanity, it is certain this is no improper Method to attain that most useful and necessary Science. Pride is most apt to grow in the *Shade*, and flourishes wonderfully in a *recluse Life*, where Men seldom converse with any thing better than themselves. But when we enlarge our Views, and find in the World many that outshine us far in those very Things of which we are proud; this, or nothing, will teach us to be humble and modest.

IF your Office or Profession is more honourable than that of your Neighbour; yet *his* may be equally useful to the World, and even necessary to your own Support. And  
it



## Motives to Humility.

205

SERM.

IX.

it would ill become you to despise or insult any Man for the Meanness of his Station, who diligently pursues any just Employment, that is calculated for promoting the lowest Interest of Mankind. All the parts of human Society, whether less or more honourable, have a mutual Dependence among themselves, like the Members of the same Body; and therefore ought to maintain a mutual Regard and Value for each other: High and Low, Rich and Poor, are bound together by reciprocal Ties. None of the Ranks of Life can well subsist without the rest; and each by different ways are subservient to the common Good. You are not the Head perhaps; but suppose you were: *The Head cannot say to the Hands, I have no need of you; nor to the Feet, I have no need of you.* God, who appoints to every Man his Station, placed you where you are; not that you should treat your Inferiors as your Slaves; but that you should employ your Ability in protecting and cherishing them. This is the generous and manly part: This is the End for which he gave you the Pre-eminence; and you will degrade yourself, and forfeit his

SERM. his Favour, whenever you act contrary  
IX. to it.

Did we often revolve such Sentiments in our Minds, they would gradually work in us a humble Disposition. It will also be of Service, if we attend to those of our Acquaintance, whose Lives are adorned with this lovely Accomplishment. From their Examples we may best learn the Amiability of Humility, and shall pass insensibly from Love to Imitation.

To all this we should add, sincere Prayer to Almighty God the Fountain of Goodness, that he would succeed our Endeavours, and clothe us with unfeigned Humility : Or, in the Words of the Son of *Syrach* : O LORD, FATHER and GOD of my Life, give me not a proud Look ; but turn away from thy Servant always a haughty Mind.





## S E R M O N X.

A PERSUASIVE TO DILIGENCE.



R O M. xii. 11.

*Not slothful in Business—*



HAT we were born for Action, and not to spend our Days in Sloth, is plain, both from the Constitution of our Nature, and from the Circumstance of our Being. We are exposed to numberless Wants, as it should seem, on purpose to find us Employment; for whereas Nature provides Food and Cloathing for other Animals, without requiring any Art of their own, Man is compelled to seek what is proper for his Support  
by



SERM.

X.

by his own Labour and Invention. The Earth refuses to supply him with Corn and Fruits, 'till it has been subdued and cultivated with considerable Toil. Whatever relates, either to Comfort or Decency, with regard to the Body, requires Pains to obtain it; and all the Embellishments of the Mind, which distinguish Men so widely from each other, are not to be acquired without Industry and Care. It was not therefore absurdly said, that *none of the Gifts of Providence are entirely gratuitous*; since God has fixed our own Labour, as the Price we are to pay for every valuable Enjoyment.

AND upon Enquiry we shall find, that the Frame of our Nature in this, as in other respects, is wisely adapted to the Condition of our Being. Every Animal, and especially Man, loves to be doing somewhat or other, and cannot endure a State of perpetual Inactivity. Brutes themselves hate to be confined, though they may be supplied with better Food, and in greater Plenty, than when they enjoyed their Freedom. And, that this Aversion to Rest is still more prevailing in human Creatures, we may learn from Children in their early Years, when  
the

*A Persuasive to Diligence.*

209

the propensities of Nature are most easy to be discovered. Infants, we see, delight to be in Motion. When they are somewhat grown, they take so much Pleasure even in toilsome Diversions, that many times they can scarce be restrained from them by Threatnings or Punishments. This desire of being in Action grows up with them, and attends them through all the stages of Life. Hence if neither Mind nor Body is employed, the most indolent Men are never long contented, but, for want of better Business, they saunter about, and fall into idle Company or trifling Amusements. And no one, that has the Spirit of a man, would wish to be continued in Life, on condition he should do nothing at all in it, though he was to be continually furnished with the most exquisite Pleasures. Indeed, when our Strength and Spirits are exhausted with labour, Rest is natural, useful and sweet; but continual Inaction is just the reverse of all these. It is contrary to nature; 'tis so far from being pleasant, that it quite destroys the relish of Life, and is most prejudicial to us in a variety of respects.

SERM.

X.

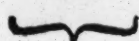
VOL. II.

P

BUT

SERM.

X.



BUT before we consider more distinctly the Evils arising from a slothful Habit, let us enquire a little, after what Manner it is formed and contracted.

SOME persons are naturally more disposed to Indolence than others. The Springs of action, their Desires and Affections, are too weak to keep them in Motion. They are of a heavy and listless turn, and seem to do nothing without great Reluctance. Others, to whom Nature has given more active Spirits, become a prey to Sloth, through the fault of their Parents, who neglect to lead them into any regular Employments. And when the Young are suffered to fall into this vice, they are seldom known to get clear of it afterwards. In such cases, I know not whether more Pity is due to them, or Blame to those, who had the care of their Education.

PUSILLANIMITY, or Cowardice, is also frequently the Parent of Idleness; for when men have conceived too low an opinion of their own Abilities, they dare not venture to try them; and are disheartened, by I know not what imaginary Difficulties, from undertaking those things which they might have

per-



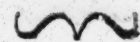
## *A Persuasive to Diligence.*

211

performed with Ease. Such persons are described by *Solomon*, with a good deal of humour, when he represents the *slothful Man*, as saying in excuse for his Idleness, *There is a Lion without, I shall be slain in the Streets.*

SERM.

X.



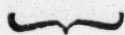
Something as improbable, as that he should meet a Lion in the Streets, restrains him from action, or at least serves him for a pretence to cover his Laziness. If Persons of this pusillanimous Temper having once failed in their Undertakings, it utterly damps what little Spirit they had, and prevents them from renewing their attempts, through a despair of Success. Disappointments, which excite the noble Mind to use it's utmost industry and force, utterly depress the weak and timid Soul, and make it more averse to action than ever. Thus it often happens, when men have toil'd for the good of Mankind, and performed many laudable actions, in hopes of gaining Applause and Gratitude. For if they do not meet with the Honour they had promised themselves, they are apt to conceive an aversion to Mankind, which inclines them to retire from the World, to

Prov.

xxvi. 13.

SERM.

X.



deprive it of their Services, and to bury themselves in Obscurity and Sloth.

ANOTHER common cause of Sloth is a vehement love of Study and Contemplation. Indeed, if we pursue valuable Knowledge, in order to impart it to others, or to qualify ourselves for the right conduct of Life, this is so far from deserving the name of sloth, that it is one of the best and noblest employments in the World. On the contrary, if the sole end of our Study be to fill our Heads with useless notions, whatever pains we may take, it is no better than a specious kind of Idleness; which if it be somewhat plausible, is upon that account the more dangerous. Nay, there are some upon whom the Lessons of sound Wisdom have no other effect, than to beget in them a lazy Disposition. Having learned from hence to despise Honour and Wealth, as vain, frivolous, and not worth the Labour that is required to obtain them, and having in the mean time no principles of Virtue strong enough to carry them into action, they sink of course into a state of Indolence. To such persons, a little Ambition seems quite necessary,

*A Persuasive to Diligence.*

213

SERM.

X.

necessary, because nothing else can save them from Sloth.

NOR must I omit to mention among the causes of Idleness, an indulgence in sensual Pleasures, which enervate all the powers both of Mind and Body, and render them unfit for their respective functions. Besides, many are too proud to work; Business is a vulgar thing, and below their Rank. And in truth, it is a great pity these delicate Spirits should be forced to eat, or sleep, or do any thing like ordinary People. But since cruel Nature will have it so, how shall they sufficiently distinguish themselves from others, except by their Laziness?

SUPERSTITION also is apt to promote a slothful Habit. The fears with which it strikes men, stupify the Soul, and chill all it's active Powers. It teaches them to believe, that God brings about no events by means of human Industry, but over-rules every thing by certain fatal and miraculous Interpositions; wherefore they are sure never to exert their own Endeavours, which they have learned to regard, as insignificant and vain. Were it possible for them to proceed constantly upon this principle, they would

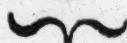
P 3

never



SERM.

X.



never engage in any Action at all; for why should a man put himself to any trouble, when he is verily persuaded, that he can do nothing for himself, but what Providence will do for him, without any regard to his own Labours? Not that the doctrine of an universal Providence, when rightly understood, does by any means supersede human endeavours; for though it be most certain, that God communicates to us every Blessing we enjoy, and protects us from all the Evils we escape; yet, for the most part, he bestows these favours upon us by way of Reward to our Industry, or denies them by way of Punishment to our Sloth.

SOME say, in Excuse for their Idleness, *they can find nothing to do.* If this be not a frivolous pretence, they must certainly have a very poor Invention. God has provided, that none of us need to be at a loss for useful Employments. He that has no Wants of his own, may see many around him, whom he may oblige by his Services; or if not, he may worthily employ himself in purifying his Mind from it's evil Passions, and improving his Reason by the Study of divine and human things. These exercises  
are

## *A Persuasive to Diligence.*

215

SERM.

X.



are competent to all seasons and circumstances of Life; and the advantages that flow from them, are such as will amply recompence our greatest Pains. Here, even they who labour under the Infirmities of Age, may find suitable Employment. For though they have a sufficient Excuse from those actions which require strength of Body, they may be improving their Minds in Knowledge and Virtue. And indeed they ought to keep the Faculties of the Soul in habitual Exercise, or else they will be apt to languish and decay, like those of the Body. Old Persons also are commonly the best qualified to administer those things, which are effected more by Prudence than Labour. They may guide Youth into the paths of Wisdom, and assist others with their counsel and advice. From all which it appears, that such is the condition of human Life, that no Man needs to be idle in it, except he will.

THUS I have briefly described the *principal Causes* of Sloth, that we may learn to avoid or guard against them. And to convince us, that this Affair is worthy of our

P 4

Cau-

SERM. Caution, let us in the NEXT PLACE consider  
 X. *the EVILS which attend an idle unactive Life.*

AND FIRST, it is evident that Sloth is highly prejudicial to a Man's worldly Interest. *Fortune, Fame, Friends*, of whatever consequence they are to the Enjoyment of Life, are generally acquired by Diligence, and lost through Idleness and Neglect. We may daily see in the World many Instances that confirm these Maxims of Solomon; *The*

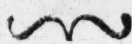
Prov. x. *Hand of the diligent maketh rich. Drowsi-*  
 4.  
 —xxiii. *ness shall clothe a Man with Rags. He that*  
 21. *is slothful in his Works, is Brother to him that*  
 —xviii. 9. *is a great Waster. The Hand of the Diligent*  
*shall bear Rule, but the slothful shall be under*  
 —xii. 24. *Tribute. Seest thou a Man diligent in his Bu-*  
 —xxii. *siness? He shall stand before Kings, he shall*  
 29. *not stand before mean Men. By what do*  
 men commonly thrive in the World? but by an earnest application to Arts, Business, Trades, Husbandry. How many have grown by these means, so as to overtop Multitudes, that were born to superior Fortunes? How many by neglecting them have been reduced to Poverty? Though indeed, he that can live upon his own Labour, is prepared  
 against



against all Events. If Fortune frowns, he needs not be disheartened. He has a Resource within himself: His Bread is in his hands: to him therefore Poverty is either none, or a very tolerable Evil. But how much more unhappy is that Man's condition, whose Idleness, at the same time that it leads him to Indigence, renders him incapable of supporting himself? who must either be starved to Death, or live in a precarious and mean state of Dependence upon others.

SERM.

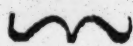
X.



OTHER Vices may be more detested, but there is none more *despicable than Laziness*. It is generally regarded as infamous and dishonourable; and therefore few are pleased with the Imputation of it. An Idle Man is a most insignificant Creature: alike useless to others and himself, and seldom fails to be despised as such. He will not only be destitute of Honour, which is usually the reward of laudable Industry and Toil, he must also endure the Contempt of Mankind; which he, who thinks he can easily bear, may find more grievous than he had imagined, when he comes to feel it. To this we may add the want of Friends; the most valuable

SERM.

X.



luable of outward Enjoyments, but which cannot well be retained, if we give ourselves up wholly to Indolence. If we desire to have Friends, nothing is so necessary, as that we be diligent in serving and obliging them; for we cannot justly expect any Man's Friendship, so long as we take no Pains to make ourselves useful and agreeable to him.

THUS it will be found, that with relation to the outward circumstances of Life, the habit of Sloth, in proportion as it prevails, tends to make a Man *Indigent, Friendless* and *Contemptible*.

How pernicious it is to the Body, may be judged by the difference we find between those Constitutions, which are accustomed to moderate Labour, and those which are wholly Strangers to it. The former, we see, commonly excel in Complexion, Vigour and Health. Due exercise of Body throws off all Superfluities; clears the Vessels; raises proper ferments in the Humours; promotes a regular Circulation of the Blood, and thus prevents Distempers, or dissipates them when growing. Hence, though Physicians differ endlessly about other Prescriptions, they all agree in recommending *bodily Exercise*,

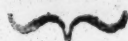
*A Persuasive to Diligence.*

219

*ercise*, as the necessary means of Health and long Life. It may indeed be some time before Constitutions, which are naturally good, suffer any great and sensible Damage from an Indulgence in Sloth; but they usually pay dear for it in the End. The Evil steals upon them at first, and advanceth by slow Degrees, 'till it becomes at last evident enough: An uneasy Corpulence, Gout, Dropsy, Lethargy, are Afflictions, which the slothful are obliged to bear, at a time, when Age is sufficiently burdened with it's own Infirmities.

SERM.

X.



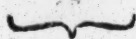
If you care not to look so far before you, yet perhaps you have some regard to the present Gratifications of Sense; now nothing impairs and corrupts these so much as Idleness. To enjoy those Pleasures that relate to the Body, in any tolerable Perfection, it is requisite above all things, that we have a healthy Sense, and vigorous Appetite; but that these are impaired by Sloth, and promoted by Exercise, I suppose every man may have learned in some measure from his own Experience. I make no doubt, but he, who comes from his Work hungry and tired, and sits down to homely Provisions,



*A Persuasive to Diligence.*

SERM.

X.



receives from thence far more Pleasure, than one that having been engaged in no Exercise, partakes at a Table furnished with whatever is most agreeable to his Taste. Labour creates a sound Appetite, and this gives the best relish to our Food; but between Sloth and Pleasure, there is such a strong and natural Enmity, that no way has hitherto been found, though many have been tried, to reconcile them to each other.

SUCH are the consequences of Sloth with regard to the *Body* and its Pleasures. But we shall find it still more pernicious, if we consider *the bad Effects it has upon the Mind*. As to Knowledge and Learning, those noble Improvements of the Soul, it is plain the Proficiency we make in them, is mostly proportioned to the Pains and Application, with which we pursue them. For whatever difference Nature has made in the original capacities of Men, we often see, that the best Genius may be spoiled by Negligence, and far excelled by Persons of inferior Capacity, who are more assiduous and diligent in the search of Wisdom. The faculties of the Mind become stronger and more active, the more we exercise them; but if we suffer

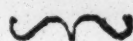
*A Persuasive to Diligence.*

221

fer them to remain unemployed, both our Judgment and our Memory will be apt to languish.

SERM.

X.



NOR does the *Understanding* suffer alone, the disease invades the *Temper* also, and does it the most manifest Injury. Ill-humour and Spleen are the common, I had almost said, the inseparable Companions of Idleness: for as in the Body, when no natural Exercise is used, the Spirits, which want their due Employment, turn against the Constitution, and find work for themselves in a destructive way; so in a Mind which languishes for want of proper Employment, the Thoughts and Affections being obstructed in their due course, raise Disquiet, and prey upon the Soul itself. Hence it is, that generally speaking, no sort of Men are more impatient and restless, more easily provoked, more difficult to please, than such as are accustomed to a State of unnatural Indolence and Rest.

MANY of the *worst Vices* naturally proceed from Laziness. When it prevails in Men, who have nothing to subsist upon besides their own Labour, it often leads to those Crimes that are punished by the Laws.

In

SERM.

X.

In others it produceth Lust and Licentiousness; for when the Mind is enervated by Sloth, and grown averse to Employment, it readily yields to the first Solicitations of dissolute Pleasure. From the same source Envy is apt to spring. For he who sits still, and uses no Endeavours to advance himself, must observe many, who by the active Pursuit of Honour, Wealth, or Learning, raise themselves to an Eminence above him; and it is much if he can see this without being grieved at their Success, and looking with a malignant Eye at those Advantages, which he might have attained himself, if he would only have taken the same Pains. The slothful Man is also commonly a Niggard. He that is diligent in Business, may derive to himself a constant Stream of Wealth, out of which he can dispense to others in Bounty and Hospitality; but a Person of no Industry is so far from having wherewith to be liberal, that he has often little enough for his own Occasions.

It is not therefore an easy Matter to be idle and innocent; nay to be so habitually, is altogether impossible: for though one of this Character should escape the Vices I have  
men-



mentioned, he is justly chargeable with Guilt, as he neglects the Duties of Life, and is wanting in the Regard he owes to human Society. Something is due from every Man to his Family; something to his Friends; and something also to that Community, from which he receives Benefit and Protection. Now he who is never usefully employed, violates all these Obligations, both in the Family and Commonwealth. He is not only unprofitable, but burthensome. He lives, like a Drone, upon the Labour of others; and receives benefit from them, without giving them any thing in return: and he that can justify himself, must have either none, or very absurd notions of Equity and Justice.

A MAN that is thus useless to the World, must forfeit all the noblest Satisfaction of Life. He can be conscious of little Merit with regard to Mankind; he seldom sees the most agreeable of all Sights, the Face of one whom he has obliged; he seldom hears the sweetest of all Sounds, the sincere Praise of others, which he knows he has deserved. His past Life can afford him nothing

SERM.

X.



thing but what is insipid, or distasteful in the review; like the prospect of a dreary Waste, or the remembrance of a dull and tedious Dream. The older he grows, the more contemptible he becomes, and the more a Slave to that Vice which exposeth him to Contempt. He lives undesired; dies unlamented; and the greatest favour he does Mankind, is, when he leaves them his room, without having laid them under any Obligation to mourn for his Departure.

THUS I have endeavoured to represent the unhappy Effects and Guilt of Idleness. And from the whole it appears, that this drowsy Habit is not more shameful in itself, and contrary to Interest, than pernicious to Health of Body and Chearfulness of Mind. Let us not then give up ourselves to this Lethargy of Soul; or if we have indulged it too far already, let us resolve to shake it off, before it is grown too inveterate to be cured. When Ease would tempt us with her deceitful Charms, let us not suffer ourselves to be ensnared by her; but call to mind the Enjoyments we must lose, and the Evils we shall suffer, if we listen to the Voice of this  
foothing

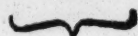
*A Persuasive to Diligence.*

225

soothing Enchantress. Let us attend rather, need I say, to Avarice and Fame? or is it not enough, that Virtue and Religion exhort us, that we fly from Sloth, and be, in the main, some way or other usefully employed?

SERM.

X.



GOD has placed us in Life, not that we should waste our time in sleep and sauntering; but that we should be active in improving our Nature, and serving our Generation. And the shortness and uncertainty of our earthly Being, should warn us to apply ourselves with the utmost diligence to the Work for which we were sent into the world; that so, if Death should soon overtake us, it may not justly be said, we have lived in vain. The next moment that passes, will lessen the Remainder, if it be not the last of this short life; the Day will instantly be over; the *Night is at Hand, in which no Man can work.* Whatever good therefore we can find to do for ourselves, for our Families, for our Friends, for human Society, *let us do it with our Might, since there is no Thought, nor Device, nor Imagination in the Grave, whither we are all hastening.*

Eccl. ix.

10.

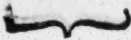
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SERM.

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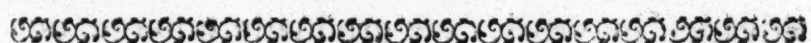
OUR Saviour has taught us to regard our *time* and *abilities*, as so many *Talents* committed to our Management by Almighty God, who in due time will call us to account; and reward, or punish us, as we improve them, or not. When this enquiry shall be made into our Lives, it will not avail us, that we can say, we have done no Harm. It will be further enquired, what good we have done? to what valuable End we have applied the Powers and Opportunities, with which we have been entrusted? and if it appears, that we have not improved our Talents, but buried them in the Earth, though our Lives may have been harmless in other respects, we shall be condemned as wicked and unprofitable Servants.

SERM.



## S E R M O N XI.

The PLEASURE and ADVANTAGE  
of FRIENDSHIP.



PROV. xvii. 17.

*A Friend loveth at all Times.*

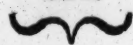


PROPOSING to discourse from  
the Words concerning FRIEND-  
SHIP, we shall endeavour,

- I. FIRST to awaken your Attention, by  
considering the *Pleasures* and *Advanta-*  
*ges* arising from it.
- II. WE shall attempt to describe the *Na-*  
*ture* of Friendship.

Q 2

III. WE



## *The Pleasure and*

III. WE shall lay before you some *Rules* relating to the *choosing, gaining and preserving* of Friends.

I. WE are to consider the *pleasures* and *advantages* arising from *Friendship*. We are each of us led into Society, not only by our Wants, but also by our natural Affections and Propensities. The social Disposition appears at first, by Love to a Family, to Parents, Brothers, Sisters, and all who are allied to us by Blood and Kindred. As we advance in years, we gradually enlarge our Acquaintance, and soon begin to observe and distinguish the Tempers and Manners of those that are near us. Some we dislike, others we admire and approve without any prospect of Advantage to ourselves. These sentiments are, as it were, the first sparks and symptoms of Friendship in us. Which, when they are confirmed by long Acquaintance, made known by unsuspected expressions, and answered with the mutual Love of those we esteem; do afford some of the purest Enjoyments, and contribute, as we shall now endeavour to shew, in many respects,



*Advantage of Friendship:*

229

spects, to the support and happiness of human Life.

SERM.  
XI.

NOTHING would be more grievous and intolerable to a man than a state of perpetual Solitude, though all Arts and Sciences were contained in his understanding; though all his Wants could be supplied by a wish, and his Senses constantly regaled with the most exquisite Pleasures of every sort; yet if he was excluded from Society, and denied the privilege of Commerce with his Kind, he would soon find himself miserable enough. And, if we suppose him removed out of this solitary State, and placed among multitudes of Men, with whom he should never contract any Intimacy or Acquaintance, his case would be altered but very little for the better. So long as there was none to feel his Concerns with him; none by whose Interest he felt himself affected; so long as there was no mutual kindness between him and any of his Kind, no free Communication of Joys, Grievs, and Counsels; he might breathe and live indeed, but he could not enjoy Life, or taste any Happiness that would be worth wish-

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ing for. The World would still be to him a mere Defart; a miserable Solitude! for a *Crowd* is not *Company*. Faces are but a Gallery of Pictures; and Talk but empty Noise, where there is no Love. So dull and wretched a thing is human Life, when Friendship is removed out of it. But let Friendship, like the Sun, be restored; immediately Life is enlivened, the Gloom vanishes, and the Prospect brightens. Friendship therefore is the only thing on earth, concerning the Usefulness of which all Men are agreed. Virtue itself is despised by many, and regarded as only a matter of Convenience, and vain Ostentation. Some can look down on Riches with contempt, being satisfied with a cheap Diet, and moderate Appearance. If some are inflamed with the lust of Honours and Distinction, there are others that esteem them as the merest Trifles. In like manner all other things, which are valued by one part of Mankind as admirable and good, are condemned and neglected by another part as mean and worthless. But Friendship is in some degree admired and pursued universally. All that

make

*Advantage of Friendship.*

230

SERM.

XI.

make Virtue and Justice their business, will of course establish Friendship; for (not to mention that Friendship is a shining part of Virtue) an honest Man will always be esteemed by his honest Acquaintance, and will also esteem them in his turn: Friendship therefore necessarily springs from Virtue, and constantly attends it. Those that choose a Life of action and business, or engage in the management of publick Affairs, are obliged to seek out Friends to assist and strengthen them. Such as spend their days in Study and Contemplation have need of Friends; for even Truth and Knowledge become insipid, if we have none to join with us in the Search, none who share in the Discovery: so that if a Man could ascend up to Heaven, and from thence discern the order of the Stars, and beauty of the World, this glorious sight would yield but a poor Entertainment, unless he had some Friend with him, to whom he could describe and relate the things he had seen. They, who through a contracted aversion to Mankind, seem to delight in a recluse and solitary Life, yet cannot be easy

Q 4

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SERM.

XI.

without somebody, into whose Ears they may discharge their Spleen and Venom. The men of Pleasure, if they have any thing generous in their Tempers, are sensible that the most exquisite Pleasures, enjoyed in Solitude, are good for nothing; and and derive their principal relish from Company, and some sort of Friendship. And even a Gang of Robbers cannot subsist without Fidelity, Affection and mutual Trust. Thus does Friendship, somehow, insensibly creep into the lives of all men; and suffer no scheme of Action or Employment, to be wholly destitute of itself.

BUT, when it prevails among *wise* and *good* Men, it is not easy to say how many and great are the Advantages attending it. What can be more delightful, than to have one to whom you may pour forth your whole Soul, and with whom you may converse, as freely as with yourself? How sweet is it to repose ourselves on the mutual Benevolence of a Friend, and to share with him in the Enjoyments and Sufferings of Life? The very Aspect of one whom we heartily esteem, is enough to dispel any ordinary

*Advantage of Friendship.*

233

SERM.

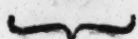
XI.

inary Cloud of cares and sorrows; and suddenly inspires us with Chearfulness and good humour. Among friends, Grievs are forgotten, and Pleasures multiplied; Joys are reflected without end, from Eye to Eye, and secretly imparted from Breast to Breast. He, who has the most and best Friends, has the strongest defence this World can afford, against the possible evils and misfortunes of Life. Friendship therefore gives a shining appearance to the indistinct prospect of Futurity. It enables us to look forward with good Hope, and suffers not our Mind to sink and be discouraged. When a man sees his Friend, he sees another Self; wherefore they are present, when they are absent; in want, they abound; though weak, they are powerful; and what is strangest of all, they live after they are dead; in the Memory, Honour, and Affection of surviving Friends. If you take away Friendship and Love out of the World, you weaken the bond of all Societies, and destroy the best cement of Families and States; for neither can a Family nor Commonwealth happily subsist, where there is no mutual Affection between the parts of it. But

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SERM.

XI.



if here you cannot thoroughly apprehend the great force of Harmony and Friendship, you may learn it however from the dreadful effects of Discord and Dissention ; for there is no Family so powerful, no State so firm, which cannot be overturned and ruined by Enmities and Quarrels.

I KNOW not whether God has given to mankind any thing better in the world than Friendship, *Virtue* only excepted. Some prefer Riches ; others Health ; some Power ; others Honour and Distinction ; and also many prefer Pleasures. The last are the enjoyments of Brutes. And as for the former, they are all uncertain and precarious, depending, not so much on our own prudence and conduct, as on the caprice of Fortune. They who place their *chief good* in Virtue, make a laudable and wise choice. But then, this very virtue necessarily produces Friendship, and would be imperfect without it. Many other things, which are coveted and pursued, are only adapted to some particular Ends. Riches are valued for their use ; Power, as it procures submission ; Honours, that you may be praised ; Pleasures, that you may rejoice ; Health, that you may be



*Advantage of Friendship.*

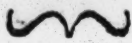
234

SERM.

XI.

be free from pain, and easily discharge the functions of the Body: But Friendship answers all things. Wherever you turn you, it is ready at hand: It can be excluded out of no place: It is subject to no Satiety; never unreasonable, never troublesome. The more you enjoy it, the better you relish it. It is welcome at all times, and suited to every Condition; adorning Prosperity, and rendering Afflictions light and easy.

In Adversity, next to God, a Friend is the best refuge. He frees us from Perplexity by his Counsels; restores our Fortunes by his Assistance; or, if our Distress cannot be removed, he takes a part of it to himself, and easeth our Burthen by Sympathy and Consolation. A Friend is acquainted with our Temper; he knows best what will affect us most sensibly; with what we are grieved, and in what we rejoice; and therefore he is best qualified to revive and comfort us by seasonable Advice. Besides, the same Consolation, which is weak and ineffectual, when it proceeds from an indifferent Person, is oftentimes found of great force, when administered by a Friend. The importance of Friendship to the indigent



gent and distressed is easily seen, and universally acknowledged; and since no Man knows what may befall him before he dies, whoever neglects to acquire Friends in his prosperity, is guilty of great Imprudence, and may possibly live to repent his Folly.

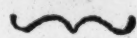
THERE are some however, who, rating every thing by a low and sordid Interest, imagine that Friendship does not proceed from benevolence and real Affection, but from Weakness and a sense of Want. Hence they conclude, that, if a man is well established in Power and Riches, he has little occasion for Friends, and may live happily without them. But these Men betray their ignorance of the World, and of human nature. For who is there on Earth, that would choose to be surrounded constantly with all manner of Plenty, and live in the greatest Abundance of all things, on condition he should neither love any, nor be loved by any? Those that would sell the golden joys of Friendship for such trifles as these, would make a very wretched bargain. For what valuable end could all their Plenty and Affluence answer, if they had none to congratulate and rejoice with them; none, to whom they

*Advantage of Friendship.*

237

they could with pleasure communicate, at least the superfluities of their Fortune? If Riches are good in any sense, it is as they enable Men to be liberal; and that Liberality is most honourable and delightful, which proceeds from a friendly and affectionate Heart. Besides, how can Power and Wealth be preserved with security, if it be destitute of Friends? The higher human Greatness riseth, the more it is exposed to Envy and Torture; and therefore the greater need it has of Friends to support it.

SERM.  
XI.

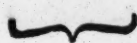


AND as Friendship is advantageous to every condition, so it is also to persons of all Ages. The *Young* are introduced into life by their Friends, and guided into prudent courses, when to choose for themselves would be extremely dangerous. Their Friends observe and honour them when *Old*, and supply the Infirmities of their advanced years by their own Activity. In the prime of life, Friends assist one another in worthy actions, and mutually contribute to their Credit and Success; for by means of our Friends we can both lay out our Schemes more wisely, and execute them with greater ease. Our Bodies are confined to a place, but by our  
Friends



SERM.

XI.



Friends we can act at a distance, and, as it were, be present in many places at the same time. How many things are there, which a man cannot, with any Face and Decency, say or do himself? He can scarce alledge his own Merits with modesty, much less extol them. He cannot perhaps brook to supplicate, or beg; but these things are grateful in a Friend's mouth, which are blushing in our own. Again, a man's Person hath many peculiar Relations which he cannot put off. He cannot speak to his Son, but as a Father; to his Wife, but as a Husband; to his Enemy, but upon terms. Whereas a Friend, who bears not the like Relations, may speak as the case requires. Men have their time, and die often in the desire of some things, which they principally take to Heart; as the education and disposal of their Children, the finishing of a Work, or the like. If a man have a true Friend, he may rest almost secure, that the Care of these things will continue after him.

BUT the greatest excellence of Friendship, (I mean among the Wise and Good, who only are capable of *true* Friendship) is, it's tendency to improve the mind in Knowledge

*Advantage of Friendship.*

139

SERM.  
XI.

ledge and Virtue. While we keep our thoughts wrapt up in our own breast, they are apt to lie in some Confusion ; so that many times we ourselves cannot discern them distinctly ; but when we converse freely with a Friend, we open and display them. On such occasions our Understandings clear and break up, and our Wits are sharpened one upon another. We range our Sentiments in order, and see how they look when they are expressed in words, In short, we grow wiser than ourselves, and that more by an hour's Discourse than a day's Meditation. When Friends meet, knowledge flows out of one into another ; and as Wisdom is sweet to the Soul, so it is never more agreeable, than when it proceeds from the lips of Friends. They give without Ostentation, receive with sincere Delight, and mutually rejoice in each other's Improvement.

ADD to this, the benefit of good Counsels ; by which we are often freed from perplexity, and either directed into the right way, or brought back when going wrong. Man is often to himself the most pernicious Flatterer ; and there is no such remedy against Self-flattery, as the liberty of an honest

SERM.

XI.

nest Friend. The best preservative to the health of the Mind, is the faithful admonition of a Friend. To call one's self to a strict account, is sometimes thought too sharp and piercing. Instruction derived from Books and Lectures is a little flat and dead. And to observe our Faults in others, is sometimes improper for our case. But the most agreeable and effectual remedy is the judicious admonition of a sincere Friend. We may perhaps entertain fond imaginations of our own Judgment, and think ourselves well enough qualified for the wise management of our Affairs; but, when all is done, seldom can matters of Consequence be well executed without the help of good Advice. And though we may always find enough ready to thrust their Counsel upon us, yet it is a rare thing for any, but a perfect and entire Friend, to give Advice, except either in ostentation of their Wisdom, or to bring about some by-ends of their own.

THUS does Friendship improve the Understanding, and assist the Judgment. It has also the most happy effects on the Tempers and Manners. The mutual esteem of Friends, has a strange mysterious power to  
polish



## *Advantage of Friendship.*

241

SERM.  
XI.

polish the Heart; to cure it of every thing rough and fierce; to make it susceptible of generous sentiments, and inspire it with Modesty, Honour, and Humanity. Though nothing in the world is so amiable as Virtue, yet our Minds are so dull, and so much employed about sense and matter, that the abstract, Image and Idea of it, is but little regarded, and makes but a cold and languid impression: It is then we are most powerfully affected with it's Beauty, when we observe it in a Friend. Here it almost assumes a visible appearance; and if I may be allowed the expression, is presented to our Eyes, drawn out to the Life, in all it's parts and proportions. Hence our affection for it is strengthened, and our Hearts inflamed with ardent desires to possess it ourselves.

FRIENDSHIP kindles in virtuous Minds an honest Strife and generous Emulation; not with respect to Power and Riches, which, when one man gains, another looses; but the Contention here is, who shall be the wisest and best, and act his part in life with the greatest Honour and Decency? In this case there is a Prize for each of them,

VOL. II.

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SERM.

XI.

and even that which is won by one, is enjoyed by all. They therefore assist and encourage each other mutually in the Pursuit, while all that succeed, are not only rewarded with the Approbation of their own hearts, but also with the pleasure of gratifying their Friends, of gaining their Applause, and rising still higher in their Esteem and Affection. Friendship doubles the guards of virtue, by reinforcing the principles of Modesty and Shame. A man would be more ashamed to do or say a mean thing before his Friend, than in the presence of his Father, or any other, the most venerable person. His reverence for his Friend will powerfully restrain him from every thing dishonourable, and inspire him with a divine ardour in the pursuit of Virtue and Merit.

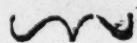
SUCH as these, are the excellent fruits of Friendship. But how honourable and delightful is *Friendship itself*, abstracted from all interest and profit whatsoever. The very love which a man has for a Friend, and the consciousness of his Friend's love for him,

*Advantage of Friendship.*

243

SERM.

XI.



him, are some of the noblest and most grateful Sensations that can possibly enter into a human heart. The greatest benefits we receive from our Friends, would be esteemed, as comparatively, of small account, were they not presumed to be marks of their Affection for us. And on the other hand, the veriest Trifles, considered in this light, are highly valued; so that he really knows nothing at all of true Friendship, who does not prefer it far above its best favours, and most important Advantages. Friendship excites the applause and admiration of all Spectators; and even when we hear of a man's sacrificing his interest, and exposing his Life to danger, for the sake of his Friends, how do we approve the generous act, and extol it with the highest Praises? From whence it follows, that Friendship, which is the best Security against the Evils of life, and the Source of so many valuable Enjoyments is also good in itself, and worthy of our pursuit for it's own sake.

AND now I leave you all to judge, what regard we should pay to them, who would

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SERM.

XI.

recommend it to us, as a point of Prudence, to abstain from Friendships. “Why, say  
“they, should we trouble our heads with  
“other men’s Affairs and Interests; it is  
“enough for a man to mind his own bu-  
“siness; here he will meet with sufficient  
“Anxiety, without being entangled in the  
“Concerns of others, and drawing upon  
“himself a multitude of needless and su-  
“pernumerary Cares.” Admirable wisdom  
this indeed! As if one should desire to have  
the Sun extinguished, because it’s heat is  
sometimes troublesome; for the Sun is not  
more necessary to the Beauty and Prosperity  
of the world, than Friendship with all it’s  
cares, to the Ornament and Felicity of hu-  
man life. If we must always fly from  
Care, we must fly from Virtue also; which  
frequently obligeth us to avoid what is base,  
with considerable Pain and Anxiety. Nay,  
if we must always fly from Care, we must  
even sit still and do nothing; and yet in this  
case, Uneasiness and Care will soon be with  
us. In short, there is nothing to be got in  
this world without Pain and Solitude.  
Glory is the reward of honourable Toils;  
Favour

*Advantage of Friendship.*

245

SERM.

XI.

Favour comes by Courtship ; and Wealth is the fruit of anxious Industry. And shall we not grudge our Labours and Cares, while we are pursuing inferior Enjoyments? Shall we chearfully take so much pains about Wealth, Houses, Servants, Goods? and shall we scruple to pay the same price for Friendship? which if I may say so, is the best and finest Furniture of life? No, no! let us leave these men to their joyless and stupid Security; pity their want of a just Taste; and apply ourselves with all diligence to the pursuit of Friendship, than which nothing is more useful, nothing more honourable, nothing more delightful.

BUT here we may have need of some cautions; for Friendship, like every thing else that is excellent, has it's Counterfeits, which by their specious semblance engage the Attention, and captivate the Hearts of the rash and thoughtless. It is therefore of importance, that we examine *what Friendship is*; and endeavour to form a clear and just notion of it: that so we may be able to distinguish the pure and

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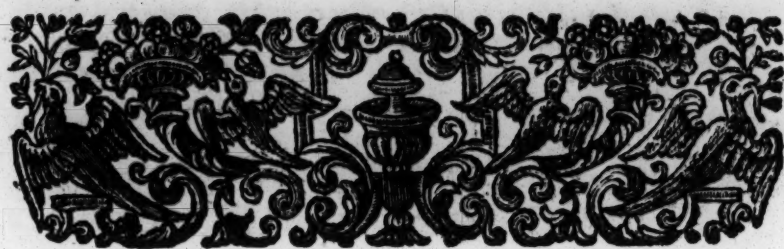
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XI.  
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genuine from the false and spurious. This leads us to our SECOND general Head, in which it was proposed to describe the *Nature of true Friendship*. But this we shall reserve.

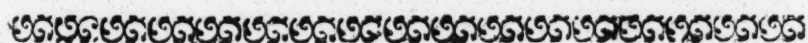






## S E R M O N XII.

The NATURE of true FRIENDSHIP.



PROV. XVII. 17.

*A Friend loveth at all times.*

 NTENDING to discourse from these Words concerning *Friendship*, it was proposed in the

FIRST Place, to awaken your attention by considering the *Pleasures* and *Advantages* arising from it.

II. To describe the *Nature* of true Friendship.

III. To lay before you some *Rules* relating to the *choosing*, *gaining*, and *preserving* of Friends.

WE have endeavoured already, in a former discourse on this Subject, to represent the excellence of Friendship; and to shew its great importance to the Pleasure, Ornament, and Felicity of human Life. Most of those Objects, which are valued by one part of Mankind as admirable and good, are condemned and neglected by another part as mean and worthless; but *Friendship*, in some degree, is admired and pursued universally; and insinuates itself some-how insensibly into the Lives of all men. Many other things that are coveted and pursued, are only adapted to some particular Ends; but *Friendship answereth all things*: Wherever we turn us, it is ready at hand; it is subject to no Satiation, never unseasonable, never troublesome; it adorns Prosperity, and multiplies our Joys; it renders Afflictions light and easy, and makes us forget our Cares and Sorrows. Friendship is the best cement of all Societies; it banishes discords out of States, aversion and bitterness out of Families; jealousy, anger, and spite out of Neighbourhoods and Fraternities. It melts men's Hearts into one another, and makes up One out of many

*The Nature of true Friendship.*

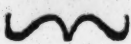
249

many Souls. It directs the Young, guards SERM.  
and supports the Old, and excites those who XII,  
are in the Prime of life, to assist each other   
in worthy Actions. It improves the Under-  
standing, and strengthens the Judgment; it  
also polishes our Tempers, refines our Man-  
ners, and makes us susceptible of generous  
Sentiments; and inspires us with Modesty,  
Honour, and Humanity. Such as these are  
the excellent fruits of Friendship. But  
how honourable and delightful is Friendship  
itself, abstracted from all Interest and Profit  
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has for a Friend, and the Consciousness of  
his Friend's love for him, are some of the  
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Friendship excites the applause and admi-  
ration of all Spectators; and even when we  
hear of a Man's sacrificing his interest, and  
exposing his life to Danger for the sake of  
his Friend, how do we approve the generous  
Act, and extol it with the highest Praises?  
Wherefore as Friendship is the best security  
against the Evils of life, and the source of  
so many valuable Enjoyments, so it is also  
good



SERM.

XII.



good in itself, and worthy of our pursuit for its own sake.

HERE, however, it will be necessary for us to be upon our guard; for Friendship, like every thing else that is excellent, hath its Counterfeits, which, by their specious semblance, engage the Attention, and captivate the Hearts of the rash and thoughtless; and the more valuable it is in itself, the more pernicious must be our Mistakes about it. It is therefore of importance that we examine what Friendship is, and endeavour to form a clear and just Notion of it, that so we may be able to distinguish the pure and genuine, from the false and spurious.

THIS leads us to our SECOND general head, in which it was proposed to explain the *Nature* of true Friendship.

IT is acknowledged by all, that Friendship consisteth in some sort of mutual Affection. This Affection, we are told, may arise upon several accounts. According to the opinion of some, Men love one another only for the sake of mutual profit, pleasure, or dependence. If this be so, Friendship is a mere affair of Traffick and Convenience; and the

*The Nature of true Friendship.*

251

SERM.  
XII.

the regard a Man has for his Friends, is no other than that which he entertains for his Money and Estate : but these principles are confuted by the Experience of every honest man, and are indeed plainly inconsistent with common Sense. For we cannot possibly in any case love one thing for the sake of another. It is true, we may desire what is in itself not only indifferent, but even disagreeable, when, by means of it, we can attain something else that is good : Thus we may desire a nauseous Dose, or a painful Operation, in order to recover our Health. But as we desire these things, at the same time that we do not love them ; so, that Friendship which ariseth purely from views of Interest and Pleasure, though it may desire and rejoice in the Usefulness of its Friend, yet is it destitute of all real Affection for him ; and therefore, in strict propriety of speech, it cannot be called Friendship at all. Besides, Friendship is one of those things which are laudable and praise-worthy. Thus we commend him who is constant in his regard for his Friends, and ready to serve and oblige them to his own Disadvantage. But Men  
are

SERM.

XII.

are never praised, often despised, for pursuing their own Gain or Pleasure; and therefore whatever is done solely with a view to these Ends, cannot proceed from real Friendship. *Again*, a Man may contribute to the worldly Interest and Pleasure of one whom he hates, and may also receive Favours from him; but Friendship is inconsistent with Hatred: wherefore though in real Friendship there will always be a disposition to good offices; yet such Friendship does not wholly consist in giving and receiving.

IF all those were Friends, who, from selfish views, contribute to each other's Interest and Pleasure, there could be no room for jealousy and suspicion among persons professing Friendship; nor the least ground for any distinction between Friends and Flatterers: for a Flatterer will be studious to serve and please, so long as he can find his interest in it; and, upon this supposition, a Friend will do it no longer; so that in this scheme, a Friend and Flatterer are only two words for the same thing. Why then is there so much nicety and caution among men of sense in the choice of Friends? why  
such



*The Nature of true Friendship.*

253

SERM.  
XII.

such great Care to distinguish the honest and sincere, from the loud Pretender and the crafty Hypocrite? Is it because they detest the interested Flatterer; expect somewhat more from their Friends than selfish views; and can be satisfied with nothing short of a pure and voluntary affection.

WOULD it not, think you, sound extremely odd, if any one, while he was professing Friendship for you, should express himself after some such manner as this: "I desire  
"you will count me in the number of your  
"Friends; but do not mistake me, I know  
"the world so well, that I look upon all  
"professions of *disinterested* Affections to be  
"mere Shams and idle Pretences. For my  
"part, I lay no claim to any such Generosity, and should not entertain the least Regard for you, were it not purely for my  
"own sake. So long therefore as it shall  
"suit with my own Convenience and Pleasure, so long, and no longer, you may depend upon my Friendship." I presume we should, none of us, take this for a profession of Friendship; and should readily tell him, that he could not think, we were at all  
obliged

SERM.

XII.

obliged to him for pursuing his own Gain or Pleasures; and that while he is influenced by nothing but Interest and Profit, he acts upon the very same principles with the Villain that should break our House, or pick our Pocket. Let us not then call that Friendship, which, if it were offered to us in plain terms, we should disdain to accept as such.

NOR can these principles easily be reconciled with Fact and common Experience; for, bad as the world is, it is no such rare thing for men to be at considerable Expence, and bring themselves into great Difficulties for the Benefit of their Friends. And is it really for the sake of their own Interest and Pleasure, that they thus voluntarily sacrifice their Ease and Fortunes? Yes, you will say, other men see them, and will be glad to purchase such fast Friends at a high rate. But I ask you, suppose you had an opportunity of hurting your Friend, and profiting yourself, unseen by any body, would you do it, or not? If you would, you dare not, at the same time, assume to yourself the sacred name of a Friend; for how could an Enemy treat him worse? And if you would not do it, you

act

*The Nature of true Friendship.*

255

SERM.  
XII.

act inconsistently with your Principles; for what should restrain you, while you acknowledge no other Obligation besides your own Advantage? Perhaps you will say, it is enough for a man that his Friend observes his good offices; since from hence he may fairly expect a proportionable return: but what return does he expect, who chooses to expose his Life for the sake of his Friend, as has sometimes happened? He does not still pursue his own Interest and Pleasures, when he rushes upon Death, and hereby renders himself incapable of either.

THERE is no more certain property, whereby to distinguish true Friendship, than that, which is contained in the words of our text, *A Friend loveth at all times*. Now let those Friendships, if we may yet call them so, which arise from views of Interest and Pleasure, be applied to this Rule, and we shall soon see how defective they are. Fortune is fickle as the Wind, and men's Interest are changing almost every day; so that he, who now obliges me for his own Advantage, may distress me to-morrow for the same reason. Our relish for Pleasure is apt to vary as we advance in years, and many of those



SERM. those Objects with which we are pleased,  
 XII. such as Youth and Beauty, wither away by  
 ~~~~~ degrees, or are suddenly blasted. Such  
 Friendships therefore are easily dissolved,  
 and seldom continue for any long Season;  
 so that if they are to be called Friendships at  
 all, yet, in this respect at least, they are very  
 imperfect.

IN Friendship there must always be a  
 pure and real Affection terminating upon  
 your Friend himself, and not carried beyond  
 him to any thing else. You must love him,  
 and any thing which he is capable of parting  
 with, and communicating to you. Nor is it  
 sufficient, that he be merely the object of  
 your good-will and kind Wishes. A just  
 man loves all Mankind; yet there is not a  
 Friendship between him and every Man:  
 he wishes well to his Enemy; but to say he  
 is a *Friend* to his Enemy, would be very  
 absurd. We may desire the reformation  
 and happiness of the most abandoned  
 Wretch; but it does not follow, that there  
 is a Friendship between him and us. It is  
 evident then, that Friendship does not consist  
 in mere *benevolence*; since we may be be-  
 nevolent to others besides our Friends.

THESE

THESE things, however, pass with many for Friendship, though they are not really so; and the Cause of such Mistakes is not hard to find. Men observe, that a Friend is useful, agreeable, and benevolent; therefore they conclude, that all those are Friends, who desire the Happiness, or mutually contribute to the Interest or Pleasures of one another. In this, as in many other cases, they imagine, that those things are the same which resemble each other, or agree only in some accidental respects. But if we consider this matter with any attention, we shall find, that where there is no Esteem, there is no Friendship. Before you can justly be called the Friend of any one, you must have observed in him some amiable Qualities, which excite in you the sentiments of Love and Approbation towards him; otherwise whatever Benefits you may receive from him, or he from you; whatever Pleasure you may enjoy in his Conversation, or he in yours, you are not, you cannot be his Friend. Nor is your Esteem for him sufficient to constitute a Friendship between you, unless you are esteemed by him also. Friendship then consists in *mutual Esteem*; to which you must

SERM.

XII.

add, that, to render it compleat, this mutual Esteem must be known, and well understood by each of the Parties, so as to leave no room for Jealousy and Suspicion of each other's affection; and therefore *an intimate Acquaintance, a frequent Intercourse of good Offices, and a long Experience of each other's Manners and Temper, are of the utmost importance to their Perfection, and Stability of Friendship.*

THIS *Esteem and mutual Approbation* will always be attended with a proportionable degree of Benevolence and Good-will. For though sometimes we may not esteem those, to whom we wish well; yet we always wish well to those whom we esteem. It is therefore an inseparable property of Friendship to desire and pursue the Happiness of its Friend; and that, not out of any regard to *private Advantage*; but as we pursue our own Happiness for its own sake, and not for any further end; so we also desire the Happiness of a Friend for his own sake, and merely because we apprehend him to be virtuous and good. This begets a free Communication of all sort of Favours; a union  
of



*The Nature of true Friendship.*

259

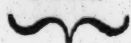
of Minds, and harmony of Intentions; for they cannot easily jar and disagree, while each is wise and honest, and desires the Happiness of the other as sincerely as his own.

SERM.  
XII.

IT were almost needless to observe, that Persons who are thus joined and mixed together in Friendship, will be useful and agreeable to one another; for Interest and Pleasure, though they cannot be the Seeds and Causes, yet they are the necessary Fruits and Effects of Friendship. Friends love to be manifesting their regards for each other, and delight in strengthening their mutual Esteem by a frequent exchange of Benefits and Favours: Wherefore they are ready to relieve each other in Distress; to promote their Wisdom, Virtue, Credit, and Prosperity, and to serve them in all honourable respects according to their Ability. Nor are they ever more highly pleased with any thing, than with the Enjoyment of each other's Presence and Conversation; this renders a long Absence tedious and disagreeable, and makes them desirous to live together as much as possible. The emotions of Friendship are always grateful; but its impressions are never so powerful and enchanting, as when

S 2

Joys,



Joys, Grief, and Counsels are mutually communicated by their Words and Countenance.

THUS you see the Original and Nature of true Friendship, which is built on Virtue, confirmed and cemented by Interest and Pleasure. But should Interest at any time fail, Virtue and Pleasure will still sustain and hold it together. If you sink into Poverty, and the utmost Distress, yet the foundation and bonds of Friendship will continue firm and unshaken, so long as you and your Friend retain your Virtue. But Virtue is of all human things the most durable and permanent. And therefore this genuine sort of Friendship sets Fortune at defiance, and answers the Character which is given of a Friend in the words of our *Text*, viz. that *he is one, who loveth at all times*. It is true, these Friendships are very rare, and not every where to be found; but what is there that is admirable, excellent, and perfect in it's kind, which is not also rare and uncommon.

SUCH however, and such only is real Friendship. It does not arise from a sense of Indigence, and the Hopes of gaining from others, what we are unable to procure for  
our-

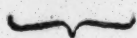
*The Nature of true Friendship.*

261

SERM.  
XII.

ourselves ; but there being certain Tempers and Habits of Mind, which are laudable and worthy in their own nature, and excite the Approbation and Esteem of all men ; such as Honesty, Justice, good Sense, Generosity, Modesty, and Temperance ; I say, these Qualities being laudable and worthy in themselves, when two Persons observe in each other any bright Appearances of them, immediately they are inflamed with mutual Admiration. And that they may display more fully the comely Features and Proportions of their Minds, and enjoy more perfectly that, which yields them such extraordinary Delight, they long to approach and examine each other. When by this means their Esteem is heightened and confirmed, and mutually signified by unquestionable Expressions, it kindles in their breasts a wonderful and lasting flame of Affection and Benevolence. From this time they are no longer two Souls, but one regards the other as himself ; is studious of his Happiness and Good, as well as of his own ; and shares with him in all the Enjoyments and Sufferings of life.





FROM this rude draught and description of Friendship, it is evident, that it cannot subsist but among the *Wise* and *Good* only. Friendship consists in a constant and steady Esteem, which Men entertain mutually for one another. But it is impossible, that there should be any such hearty and lasting Approbation between two Persons of vicious Tempers and base Manners; for though they are often subservient to each others Profit and fordid Pleasures; yet whenever they calmly reflect, they cannot but condemn and detest each other: and no wonder indeed, since they daily nauseate and dislike even themselves, and their own Behaviour.

NEITHER can a good and bad Man be joined in Friendship; their Esteem cannot be mutual. For the Good will dislike and abhor the bad. So that *Good Men* only are capable of Friendship.

AND hence we may be able to judge, what truth there is in that common Observation, that *a Similitude of Manners conciliates Friendship*. Evil Men may be alike in their Manners; yet evil Men cannot be Friends. The honest and good are alike in their Manners; and between such only can Friendship

ship take place. And therefore there may be a likeness of Manners, where there can be no Friendship; but there can be no Friendship, where there is no likeness of Manners. This Observation then would be perfectly just, if it was amended after this manner: *A Similitude of GOOD MANNERS conciliates Friendship.*

SERM.  
XII.

THUS we have finished what was intended under the SECOND general Head, in which it was proposed to explain the *nature* of Friendship. It still remains that we lay before you some Rules or Precepts with respect to the *choosing, gaining, and preserving* of Friends: But this we shall reserve —





## S E R M O N XIII.

Directions for choos[ing] and gain[ing]  
F R I E N D S .



P R O V . xvii. 17.

*A Friend loveth at all times.*



IN discoursing from these Words we endeavoured, FIRST, to represent the *Excellence of Friendship*, and shew it's great Importance to the *Pleasure, Ornament, and Felicity* of human Life. Here we observed, that most of those Objects which are valued by one part of Mankind as admirable and good, are neglected



neglected and condemned by another part as mean and worthless; whereas *Friendship*, in some degree, is admired and pursued universally and insinuates itself some-how insensibly into the Lives of all men. Many other things that are coveted and pursued, are only adapted to some particular Ends; but *Friendship answereth all things*: Wherever we turn us, it is ready at hand; it is subject to no Satety, never unseasonable, never troublesome; it adorns Prosperity, and multiplies our Joys; it renders Afflictions light and easy, and makes us forget our Cares and Sorrows. Friendship is the best cement of all Societies; it banishes discord out of States, aversion and bitterness out of Families; jealousy, anger, and spite out of Neighbourhoods and Fraternities. It melts men's Hearts into one another, and makes up One out of many Souls. It directs the Young, guards and supports the Old, and excites those that are in the Prime of life, to assist each other in worthy actions. It improves the Understanding, and strengthens the Judgment; it also polishes our Tempers, refines our Manners, makes us susceptible of generous Senti-

SERM.  
XIII.

Sentiments ; and inspires us with Modesty, Honour, and Humanity. Such as these are the excellent fruits of Friendship. But how honourable and delightful is Friendship itself, abstracted from all Interest and Profit whatsoever ? The very Love which a man has for a Friend, and the Consciousness of his Friend's love for him, are some of the noblest and most grateful Sensations that can possibly enter into a human Heart. Friendship excites the applause and admiration of all Spectators ; and even when we hear of a Man's sacrificing his interest, and exposing his life to Danger for the sake of his Friend, how do we approve the generous Act, and extol it with the highest Praises ? Wherefore as Friendship is the best security against the Evils of life, and the source of so many valuable Enjoyments, so it is also good in itself, and worthy of our pursuit for it's own sake.

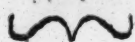
WHICH will be more fully evident, if we attend to the Nature and Original of real Friendship ; for it does not arise from a Sense of Indigence, and the Hopes of gaining from others, what we are unable to procure

cure for ourselves; but there being certain Tempers and Habits of Mind, which are laudable and worthy in their own Nature, and excite the Approbation and Esteem of all Men; such as Honesty, Justice, good Sense, Generosity, Modesty, and Temperance; I say, these Qualities being laudable and worthy in themselves, when two Persons observe in each other any bright Appearances of them, immediately they are struck with mutual Admiration. And, that they may display more fully the comely Features and Proportions of their Minds, and enjoy more perfectly that, which yields them such extraordinary Delight, they long to approach and examine each other. When by this means their Esteem is heightened and confirmed, and mutually signified by unquestionable Expressions, it kindles in their breasts a wonderful and lasting flame of Affection and Benevolence. From this time they are no longer *two* Souls but *one*: each regards the other as himself; is studious of his Happiness and good, as well as of his own; and shares with him by perfect Harmony in all the Enjoyments and Sufferings of life.

THUS,



SERM.  
XIII.



THUS we have considered the Nature and Excellence of Friendship. It now remains, according to the Method proposed, that we lay before you some *Rules* or *Precepts* with respect to the *choosing*, *gaining*, and *preserving* of Friends.

As most Men are, in some measure, sensible of the value of Friendship, there are few, who do not desire it at all, or who are not willing to be at some pains to procure themselves Friends. The Misfortune is, they generally begin at the wrong place, and pursue false measures. They look around them among their Neighbours and Acquaintance, and when they observe any, who have it in their power to serve and assist them, they hope to recommend themselves to their Friendship by the mere force of gifts and flattery. This, I say, is a wrong method of proceeding, and will by no means serve your turn, and answer your expectations. For, if ever you would succeed in the pursuit of real Friendship, you must go to work at home, and begin with improving your own Minds, and rendering yourselves worthy of it. You must first be amiable, before you can be heartily loved and esteemed,

ed. It is possible indeed, that without SERM.  
any steady and uniform Virtue, you may XIII.  
gain the inconstant affection and stupid ap-  
plause of fools and profligates, but upon  
these terms you will never be valued by men  
of Sense and Virtue; and these are the only  
persons, whose Honour and Esteem is worth  
having.

Think not therefore you may gain Ad-  
mittance to the sacred rites and mysteries of  
Friendship, 'till such time as your Minds are  
purified and duely prepared: but make it  
your first and principal Care to become wise  
and prudent, just and generous, modest and  
temperate, faithful and constant, mild, can-  
did, and good-natured. Cherish in your-  
selves all worthy and good Dispositions, that  
you may be honoured and approved by o-  
thers, and labour to acquire a habit of ad-  
miring and relishing what is just and decent  
in Characters and Manners; that when it  
appears in your Friends, you may not view it  
with stupid Indifference; but feel its power,  
and be disposed to esteem them highly upon  
the account of it. It is also of considerable  
importance that you put yourselves into some  
capacity of serving your Friends; by your  
skill

SERM.

XIII.

skill in the business, duties, and right conduct of life; or by being diligent in the acquisition, and liberal in the use of external things: for though Friendship does not wholly consist in exchanging Benefits; yet it is very much confirmed and strengthened by them. When you are thus able and willing to be useful to your Friends, you will easily give them such Proofs as are seldom called in question of your regard for them. To this we must add; let your Temper be even and composed, your Behaviour affable and obliging, your Conversation easy and chearful; remote, on the one hand, from Buffoonery and Levity; and, on the other, from rude Fierceness and sullen Austerity. In a word, cultivate in your Minds all those qualities, which embellish and adorn a rational Being; and when you are thus furnished, if still you have reason to complain that you cannot get Friends, we shall pity your case, join with you in condemning the world of Injustice; but so long as you are destitute of these Qualities, you must allow us to regard your friendless Condition as an instance of the Wisdom and good



*and gaining Friends.*

271

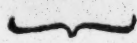
good Sense of Mankind in neglecting the  
worthless und underving.

SERM.  
XIII.

THE FIRST *Rule* then is, that we endeavour to qualify ourselves for being good Friends. In the *next Place*, we are to seek out, and apply to those, who are worthy of Friendship. It is amazing to observe, what great Care is taken in other trifling Cases, and how little in this, to choose what is best, and most perfect in its kind. If we are to hire a Servant, to buy a Beast, a piece of Furniture, or the meanest Utensil; with what caution, even to a degree of anxiety, do we enquire into their properties? how solicitous are we, before we make the Bargain, to be satisfied, that they will answer our Ends, and suit our purpose in the best manner? But what sort of persons we choose for our Friends, it seems we regard as an affair of less consequence; in which therefore it is needless to proceed with so much Caution and Prudence. Here we are so far from being over-nice and delicate, that we readily take up with any body who falls in our way by chance, with whom we get acquainted amidst the intercourse of life, or in whom we observe some one single good quality,  
though

SERM.

XIII.



though it be obscured and rendered useleſs by a multitude of Vices. And though we are often abuſed and deſerted by theſe ill-choſen and fortuitous Friends; yet too ſeldom do our miſfortunes teach us Wiſdom. Then we cry out againſt the inſtancy of man, and rail with tragical complaints at the Treachery and Wickedneſs of the human heart; when, alas! we are only ſuffering for our own Negligence, and reaping the juſt and natural fruits of a fooliſh and imprudent Choice.

IT were better however, to prevent repentance by previous Caution, than to buy wiſdom by unhappy Experience. Let us therefore proceed with due deliberation, and endeavour to fix upon certain marks and characters, by the application of which to our ſeveral acquaintance, we may learn, which of them beſt deſerve our intimacy and affection. The moſt valuable Friends are ſuch, as we can heartily and conſtantly eſteem; ſuch as will be an ornament and honour to us; ſuch as will be able and willing to aſſiſt us in the Improvement of our minds, and in the Conduct of life. We are therefore to reject the ſenſeleſs and fooliſh;  
for

for these are, at once, the most pitiful and useless Creatures. From their conversation we can neither derive benefit nor pleasure; nor are they capable of managing any thing wisely, either for us, or themselves. The dishonest, the faithless, and ungrateful are odious and base in the eyes of all men; and he who receives them into the number of his Friends, does it at the peril, not only of his honour and virtue, but also of interest. We should avoid the passionate and contentious, the ill-natured and revengeful; for these will not excuse the least failing, or pardon the slightest Offence; and besides, will be apt to involve us without end in enmities and Quarrels. Who does not scorn the fickle and inconstant, who are governed by vague humours, who are one day kind and friendly, the next, indifferent and sullen, and both they know not why? Who does not despise the proud and conceited, who are so entirely taken up with admiring themselves, as to have but little regard for any body else?

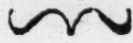
What can we propose to ourselves from such, as are mean Slaves to their ease and pleasure? The slothful will scarce prevail upon himself to put forth his hand, or rise



SERM.  
XIII.

from his seat to serve his Friend; and the intemperate are incapable of performing well the common Offices and Duties of life. The ambitious and selfish are extremely dangerous; since they are always prepared to sacrifice their Friends, the one to his interest, the other to his honour and advancement. The mean-spirited and timorous, who are dejected and frightened by every trifle, and fret and grieve at the ordinary accidents of Mortality, are, upon this account, the less proper for our Friendship; for though they may possibly have a great deal of affection, fidelity, and benevolence; yet such discontented and gloomy Companions will embitter our lives, and greatly disturb our peace and tranquility. It is therefore a point of Prudence to choose those for our Friends, who are above the world, and place their principal Happiness in their own Minds; such as have attained a true Greatness of Soul, and are able to enjoy themselves and their Friends with a serene and cheerful Spirit, amidst the cares, and hardships, and cross events of human Life.

IN SHORT, if we examine it thoroughly, we shall find, that so far as a man is defective in



in any instance of Virtue, so much he is wanting in the proper qualifications of a good Friend. We should therefore look out for those, who are possessed of good Sense, and especially of honest and well-affected Hearts; free from evil passions, desires, and lusts. Such as our Friends are, such will the world conclude us to be; and not without reason. It is scarce possible we should converse and associate with the Wise and Good, without improving in Wisdom and virtuous Manners: and Vice is of an infectious Nature, it spreads itself from one to another, and is apt to lay hold of all who come near it. Wherefore, as in a pestilence, we should be cautious of approaching a diseased or corrupted Body, lest we should catch the contagious Distemper: So in contracting Friendships, we should endeavour to select those, who are as free as possible from all moral Corruption and Disorder. It would be in vain to search in this World for a perfectly-wise and good Man; Errors and Imperfections cleave to us all in different degrees; he is the best and most worthy of our Friendship, who has the least of Vice and Folly in him.

SERM.

XIII.

BUT, you will say, how shall we make such persons our Friends? What kind of charms and allurements shall we use in order to gain their Esteem and Affection? To this I answer: In the *first* place, you must not forget what we have just been recommending, namely, that you take heed to be worthy of their Friendship, by being honest, upright, affectionate, and prudent. In the *next* place, it is your business to make them sensible that you are so. To this end, you should seek opportunities of being acquainted with them; cast yourself in their way, and let them frequently be Witnesses to your behaviour and manner of Life, converse with them freely, lay your Heart open ingenuously to their inspection; and, by your unaffected candour and simplicity, invite them to trust and confide in you. Closeness of temper and crafty reserve are great discouragements to Friendship: Men dare not venture to engage, because nobody can tell what may lie hid beneath the Cover; only it seems but reasonable to suspect, that, when the Mind is so industrious to conceal itself, it is conscious of some signal De-



*and gaining Friends.*

277

Defect, and would gain little credit by being distinctly known.

SERM.  
XIII.

THERE is no more effectual way to obtain a Man's Friendship, than by openly appearing to desire it; and endeavouring to convince him of your Regard for him. This you may do by praising him to others in his absence, and commending him modestly when he is present. Indeed vehement Protestations and fulsome applause are always offensive to men of sense; because they know these usually proceed from artifice and craft, and will be regarded by others, not so much as Testimonies to your worth, as Incense offered to your vanity. Nor should you commend him for Qualities, of which he is not possessed; for, in this case, he will be apt to suspect either your sincerity, or your judgment; and to regard your Commendation of him, as intended for raillery or indirect censure. When you praise him therefore, let it be done with Modesty, Sincerity, and Truth; and you will soon find it of wonderful Force to conciliate his affection.

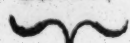
BE ready also to serve and oblige him by all manner of good Offices; spare no pains, nor esteem any labour too great, to secure to

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SERM.

XIII.



yourself the valuable possession of an *honest* and *faithful* Friend. Assist him in the best and most acceptable manner with your Property, Advice, and personal Service. Honour him before others: Be studious to observe and oblige his Friends and Relations; for you may rest assured, that a generous man will esteem the Benefits you confer on them, as Favours done to himself. If Merit lies sunk in obscurity, and you are able to raise it up, produce it to the world. If you are rich, and observe good Men in want, relieve them unasked, at such seasons Friends are cheap; and you ought with Joy to embrace the opportunity of putting out your Money at such large interest, and upon such good security, as is the Gratitude of a wise and worthy Mind.

LASTLY, if you would gain *more* Friends, behave well to those you have already. Let it appear that you are assiduous in serving them; that you delight in nothing more, than in good Friends; that you are pleased with the honourable actions of your Friends no less than with your own; that you rejoice in their Prosperity and Success no less, than in your own; and are always disposed

gratefully to resent the Favours you receive. When wise Men observe, that this is your manner of treating your Friends, they will be desirous of your Friendship, and esteem themselves honoured by it.

I AM sensible, these Rules are often abused to the vile purposes and arts of Flattery. And here a question of equal difficulty and importance offers itself to be resolved; namely, by what marks we may distinguish a *Friend* from a *Flatterer*? Indeed, one would think there could be no great danger of being imposed upon by empty Buffoons; such as haunt the Tables of the great, and go about selling their laughter and scurrilous jests for Wine and Feasting. These, alas! are harmless Creatures, and can deceive none but those who are as empty as themselves; but it is not so easy to distinguish between the real Friend and a serious Impostor, who assumes a mask of Gravity and solemn Pretence. And that this is not merely a point of Curiosity, but a matter also of some Moment, appears from hence; should we mistake, and receive a Flatterer for a Friend, when a Day of trial comes, and we have the greatest need of Friends, he will infalli-



SERM.  
XIII.

bly desert us. On the other hand, to reject a Friend, under the suspicion of his being a Flatterer, would be base Injustice to him, as well as a grievous Loss and Disadvantage to ourselves. It concerns us then to enquire wherein they agree, and to see if we can discern any Difference between them.

A FRIEND is one, who esteems and loves you : a Flatterer is one, who counterfeits a Regard for you, out of views to his own Interest and Pleasure. He will therefore assume all the motions, shapes, and colours of a Friend ; and endeavour to resemble him in every thing as exactly as he can. Will a Friend serve you, and do you good office ? So also will a Flatterer. It is true, their End herein will be different ; but then, as their intentions lie hid in their Hearts, and can only be learned from their outward Behaviour ; this behaviour being alike in them both, they will make the very same appearance to you, however different their intentions are. A Friend will study to gratify and please you, when you will be pleased with what is right ; a Flatterer will *always* study to please you, right or wrong ; and it is well, if you yourself  
do

do not make the resemblance perfect, by imagining you are always pleased with what is right. A Friend will be observant of your Friends and Relations; and this is an artifice which the skilful Flatterer never fails to make use of. A Friend will express his Esteem by praising you, whether you deserve it or not. But then, here is the Misfortune, we are generally so vain, that we cannot seriously believe we are ever praised beyond our Merit. A Friend will admonish you, when you behave amiss; a Flatterer will also sometimes reprove you, in order to appear frank and open, though commonly his Admonitions are only made use of by way of introduction to some hollow Compliments. And even here his Behaviour is not much unlike that of a real Friend, who, when he is finding fault with part of our Conduct, will often mix together praises and blame, the better to qualify and conceal the Bitterness of reproof.

IN these, and many other respects, the outside of a Friend and Flatterer resemble each other; and what is within, God alone can see. How then shall we be able to distinguish

SERM.

XIII.



tinguish them, that we may keep the Gold, and reject the Dross? Do not you tell me, I may discover them by TRIAL? This would be just the same, as if you should desire me to drink suspected Liquor, in order to be satisfied whether it will poison me, or not. I want to know them, before I venture upon the Experiment; for otherwise my Knowledge may come too late, and Ruin overtake me e'er I have made the Discovery.

WOULD you guard against Flattery? in the FIRST place, study to know yourself, and your own Defects, and wean yourself from being foolishly pleased, when you hear others say, *you know you are, what you are not.* Our vanity and Conceit is the usual avenue through which the Flatterer steals into our hearts; let us therefore deprive him of this passage, and he will find it difficult to enter by any other way.

WHEN a man professeth himself your Friend, you may judge of his sincerity, if you observe what is the general end of his purpose and bent of his Temper. For instance,

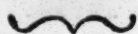


stance, if it appears to be the business of his Life, and almost the sole end of his Desires to grow rich, it is great odds he only intends to serve his own interest by you; especially, if your circumstances are such as may afford him a reasonable prospect. In like manner, if you know him to be one who has been deeply versed and long practised in the arts of Dissimulation, Charity itself will justify you in suspecting him of foul Designs. As well might you expect Grapes from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles, as Honesty from a crafty and intriguing spirit.

IF it be lawful to oppose War by War, and Violence by Force, why may we not be allowed to baffle Artifice by Art? When therefore you suspect a man of Flattery, you may pretend, now and then, to change your Sentiments; first question, afterwards deny what you had lately affirmed; commend some of your Acquaintance, then presently blame them again; for this is so common a practice, that he can never suspect you are sifting him. If he follows you through all these changes, and still assents to every thing  
you

SERM.  
XIII.

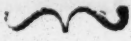
you say, you may take to yourself the glory of having *uncased* a Hypocrite.



DID you see a Parent indulge her Child, or a Physician his Patient, manifestly to their prejudice, you would scarce entertain any high opinion of her Affection, or of his Honesty. In like manner, when any body is willing to please and humour you to your own hurt, either by praising you when you do not deserve it, or complying with any foolish Desire, such an one deserves not that you should thank him as a Friend, but hate him as a Flatterer. On the contrary, if you know any who have been so kind, as to persist in offending and displeasing you, in order to do you Service, these you ought to number among your best and most assured Friends.

A FRIEND will lay himself out to oblige you by solid and important Service; a Flatterer is usually sparing of these, but extreamly diligent about ceremonies and insignificant trifles. He will be careful to give you the wall, or resign his seat to you; but not so forward to assist you in educating a Child, or gaining a good Friend.

To

To *conclude*; let us endeavour to grow SERM.  
wise by the Experiment which others have XIII.  
made. If a man has been honest, faithful,   
and constant to his former Friends; court  
his Friendship, or receive it joyfully when  
it is offered you. But, if, when he want-  
ed their assistance, he has fondly caressed  
them, and afterwards treated them with  
contempt or indifference; if he has used  
them like his clothes, taking care of them  
so long as he could wear them, and then  
throwing them away, or trampling them  
under his feet; have nothing to do with  
him; come not near him, or, if he should  
follow you, fly from him.

By such Methods we may perhaps be  
able to distinguish tolerably Friends from  
Flatterers. I am sensible, after all, that  
these Rules are not infallible. In this, as  
well as in many other cases, we may con-  
tent ourselves with *probable* evidence, nor  
expect to arrive at absolute certainty, 'till  
it shall have pleased GOD to remove the veil  
of Flesh, and give us a clearer insight into  
the nature of GOOD and EVIL.

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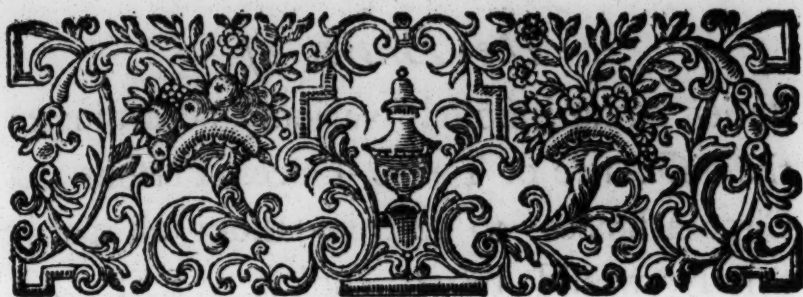


SERM.

XIII.

THUS we have laid before you some Precepts with respect to the *choosing* and *gaining* of Friends. It still remains, that we treat of the duties of Friends towards each other; after which we shall *conclude* with some Remarks on the dissolution of Friendships: But this we shall reserve.





## S E R M O N XIV.

The DUTIES of FRIENDS to each other.



PROV. XVII. 17.

*A Friend loveth at all times.*



IN some former Discourses from these Words, we have endeavoured to describe the *nature* and *excellence* of *Friendship*; and have also laid before you some Observations with respect to the *choosing* and *gaining* of *Friends*.

IT now remains, that we treat of the *Duties of Friends towards each other*. These duties

SERM.  
XIV.

duties being infinitely various, according to the difference of Times, Places, Persons and Circumstances, to describe them all particularly would be an endless work. All therefore that can be expected, is, that we insist on *some general Rules*, which may be applied to the greatest number of particular Cases, and which seem to be of principal Importance.

FIRST, then, it is required in general, that we esteem and value our Friends *sincerely*, and be always inclined to do them good, not so much from views of Interest, or merely to make them sensible of our regard for them, as because we really love them and desire their Happiness.

THERE are persons in the world, who when they think they have done their Friend a favour, remember what they have done; and by their behaviour afterwards, give reason to suspect it was not Friendship that moved them, but the hopes of an Equivalent. If we desire to know which of these two Principles prevails in us, we may ask and answer ourselves, whether at any time we should have been willing to oblige our Friends without their knowing it? If not,  
it



it is to be feared Friendship has little part in us; we are only making Bargains, and driving a Trade. For Friendship consults not it's own, but the happiness of it's Friend; and directs not it's aim to any thing beyond him: it cannot arise from mercenary motives, and is not at all, except so far as it is purely gratuitous, voluntary, and free.

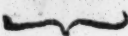
SERM.  
XIV.

YET however sincere our affection for our Friends may be, this is not sufficient to make us good Friends, unless we are tolerably acquainted with the value of things, and understand what are the main constituents of a happy Life. We must study to know, not only what is good in general, but also what will be good for persons of their particular Temper, Manners and Situation; for otherwise we may hurt them, out of pure kindness, and do them an Injury, while we are intending them a Benefit. If we had it in our power to prefer a Friend, of but moderate abilities, to a post of great Honour, Difficulty and Trust, yet the laws of Friendship do not require we should do it; because such

VOL. II.

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SERM.  
XIV.  


preferment would be detrimental to the publick, and would expose him to Shame and Dishonour.

YET possibly he himself might be so weak as to desire it, and be pleased with it. But who told you, you should always study to please your Friends, and gratify them in every desire? indeed, if we were all perfectly wise, never desiring any thing but what is good, nor pleased with any thing but what is right, this undoubtedly would always be the just and friendly part. But, as things now stand, we must seek for other rules of Conduct, and not think we have discharged our duty, when we have merely complied with the humours of our Friends. This however is too commonly the case; and what makes it more lamentable among persons of the better sort of Tempers, we are so good-natured as to comply with our Friends, though to their Disadvantage and our own Dishonour. Are they too much addicted to Pomp and artificial Pleasure? we indulge them in these things, and esteem ourselves generous, while we supply them with the means of Luxury. If they are angry,

*Friends to each other.*

291

SERM.  
XIV.

gry, we justify their Passion, and it may be, are ready to assist them in executing Revenge. If they give themselves up to unmanly grief, we look upon it as our Duty to encourage their Weakness by wailing with them, in order to please them. Are they apt to censure their Neighbours with too much freedom? we join in the slander, lest our silence should disoblige by seeming to condemn them. Are they a little fond of Praise? we must not, for the world, blame them, because they cannot bear it; nay, we often praise them beyond their merit, and hereby persuade them they are already so good, that they have no occasion to become better. Thus we contribute to spoil their Tempers, ruin their Minds, and corrupt their Manners; and by such vile complaisance really do them a much greater prejudice, than if we were to cheat them of a large Estate.

WHAT shall we say then? must we disoblige our Friends? Yes always, when it is necessary upon account of their Benefit, or our own Innocence. We should first endeavour by affectionate Advice and calm reasoning, so to work upon their Tempers,

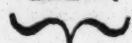
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Passions,



SERM.

XIV.



Passions, and Desires, as to bring them to be pleased with what is right; but if these methods fail, it is our business to go on steadily, doing them good and acting honourably, let them take it how they will. This, I am sure, is to be a good Friend: Whether or no it is also to be complaisant and well bred, we shall then be able to determine, when once a precise meaning has been fixed to these words.

BUT must we not study to be agreeable to our Friends? Yes, by all means, as far as is consistent with their Advantage and our Honesty. We should call in to our assistance all the Graces, but be careful to exclude Guilt and Folly; for with them no real and genuine Grace will ever associate. Moroseness and Austerity of manners are the canker of Friendship; they eat out its Heart, and cause it to wither and die away by degrees. Wherefore it is rather more than allowable, that we join with our Friends upon proper occasions, in Pleasantry, Humour, and harmless Amusements. But we should chiefly endeavour to recommend ourselves by those things which at once delight and improve the Mind, by good Sense  
and

and useful Conversation; by a prudent and honourable behaviour; by friendly, just, and generous Actions. A true Friend will be more exquisitely pleased with such things as these, than with rich Feasts, studied Complaisance, together with all the splendid Trifles, by which those endeavour to please, who know no better way to make themselves agreeable.

FRIENDSHIP was sent down from Heaven to be the Guardian of Justice and Virtue, not to encourage Wickedness and Vice. And therefore you violate it's Laws, whenever you expect from your Friend what is mean and dishonest. On the other hand, if he desires any such thing from you, be nobly obstinate, and refuse to gratify him. Should he accuse you of Stiffness, or want of Friendship, you may easily defend yourself. You cannot comply, you may tell him, because you reverence God and your own Conscience; and also because it must weaken his Esteem for you, and loosen the foundation and bounds of your Friendship. Let it therefore be established as an eternal and inviolable law of Friendship, that we desire

nothing of our Friends but what is honourable; nor do any thing at their request that is wrong and unreasonable. Though we should remember, there are many things which we cannot do for ourselves with so good a grace, which yet are handsome and becoming when they are done for our Friends: such as to extol their Merits; to supplicate to an unworthy Person; or to inveigh with some keenness against those who abuse and reflect upon them.

IT becomes us to be extremely tender of the reputation of our Friends; and to guard and promote their Honour as diligently as we do our own: being backward to believe any ill Surmises; appearing to repose an intire Confidence in their Integrity; commending before others their real merit; and rejoicing heartily whenever we see them flourish in general Esteem and Credit. To touch their Characters in their absence, when we hear them aspersed by slanderous Tongues, in any measure so as to countenance the calumny, or even to sit by in silence, and suffer the Scandal to pass without rebuke, is black and villainous.



WHEN we attend to men's public behaviour among their Friends, listen to their Professions, and observe their mutual Smiles, nothing surely could appear more loving and harmonious. But throw among them a Sum of Money, an Estate, or post of Honour, this seeming Friendship vanishes at once, and is succeeded by Enmity and fierce Contention; for Friendship can never firmly subsist when it is not preferred to external things. We should therefore be so far from loving Gain or Honour better than our Friends, that we should value them principally upon this account; because they enable us to serve and assist them. If we can go heartily into these sentiments, we shall readily impart of our Fortune to our Friends, when we have no expectation of returns from them; and shall never endure to see them in want, while we abound in Affluence and Plenty. We should also be careful to make suitable returns for the Benefits we receive; not measuring out to our Friends just so much as we have received from them, nor afraid lest any thing should run over and fall to the Ground.

SERM.

XIV.

To rob on the highway does not betray a baser mind, than to despise a Friend when we are raised above him ; or when he is innocently fallen into Poverty and Distress. They who are guilty in this respect, are sensible the practice is foul and dishonourable ; wherefore they are ashamed of it, and seek out for some excuse to vindicate their conduct. At such times we often hear them inhumanly blaming the manners of their unfortunate Friends ; and ascribing his distress to his own imprudence and ill-behaviour. But it is the more usual artifice, to disclaim any former Friendship, and pretend they never had a particular intimacy with him, *no, not they* ; they never professed an Esteem for him, and cannot see why they, any more than others, should concern themselves with his unhappy circumstances. But let them answer us fairly : Did you never (I don't say by mere verbal professions) but did you never by your behaviour give him reason to presume you had an Affection for him, when his affairs were in a better posture ? Did you never intend to persuade both him and the world, that you were his Friend ? if you did, either you had a real Friend-

*Friends to each other.*

297

SERM.

XIV.

Friendship for him or not; if you had not, you were at that time guilty of base Hypocrisy; if you had, you are now guilty of as base Inconstancy. Do not then seek any longer to cover yourself with these thin pretences, but honestly take to you the *shame* of having deserted your Friend because he is become innocently unhappy. Some however can more easily maintain a proper temper towards their Friends in Adversity, than when they are in prosperous and flourishing circumstances. Such are *first*, envious Persons, who cannot bear to see, without pain, even their Friends rising above them in Wealth and Greatness. Others take a kind of Pride in having a number of Friends, like *Clients* depending upon them, whom therefore they would be sorry to have released from such a Dependence. Others again, of a somewhat more generous turn, seem to rejoice in the wants, and to be grieved at the sufficiency of their Friends, purely because they would not be deprived of all opportunities of doing them favours. All these, in different measures, fall short of the perfection of Friendship.

It often happens, that one Friend excels another in Dignity, Rank, or personal Abilities.



SERM.  
XIV.

Abilities. In this case, he, who is superior, ought not to vaunt of his pre-eminence, but to shrink down to a level with the other. He should also employ his Capacity and Influence in the service of his inferior, adding to his power, and doing honour both to him and his Friends. On the other hand, he who is inferior, ought, as it were, to stretch himself up, being satisfied and well pleased with the superiority of his Friend, and not apt to think himself despised and over-looked; for there are many, who, in such Circumstances, are always complaining and reproaching their Friends, especially if they can plead the merit of some friendly Action which they have performed, not without some loss and difficulty. These are an odious sort of People, who are continually upbraiding their Friends with the service they have done, which ought to be remembered by him who has received the Benefit, not mentioned by him who conferred it.

IN conversing with our Friends, we should endeavour to proceed in the middle way, between Rudeness and false Complaisance.

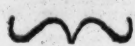
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One man assents to whatever is said, approves every thing that is done, and still appears to be pleased, behave to him how you will. Another, in the opposite extream, contradicts and blames whatever you say or do; cannot bear the smallest offence; wrangles for ever about trifles; and under colour of seeming to be honest and frank, affects a blunt and rude behaviour. The agreeable Friend is the mean between these two; it is harder to explain what he is, than what he is not; and therefore we choose to describe him *negatively*, by saying, that he is neither a Fop nor a Clown.

NEXT to the Judgment of God and our own minds, we should reverence the Eyes and Opinions of our Friends, and omit nothing in our Conversation and Behaviour, that may justly diminish their esteem for us. Those therefore deserve a severe censure, who behave in a more negligent and careless manner, when none but their Friends are present, than when they are surrounded by a croud, or conversing with a few indifferent persons. Indeed with respect to mere form and ceremony, we may and ought to lay

SERM.

XIV.



lay it aside; and carry it with a more free and unconstrained air towards Friends than Strangers. But, as to matters of real decency and good manners, we should be, at least, as exact and cautious, when we are observed by our Friends, as if all mankind were attending to our conduct; for it is very unbecoming, to shew a greater deference to common fame, than to the approbation of our Friends; and to take such liberties in their presence, as we should be ashamed to use before those for whom we have no particular esteem.

NEVER was a more dangerous rule invented with respect to Friendship, than this, "that we should behave to our *Friend*, as to "one, who will sometime be our *Enemy*." Indeed if we understand it thus, let your Conduct be unblameable, that if your Friend should ever become your Enemy, he may have nothing wherewith justly to reproach you; in this light it is perfectly just, and ought to be religiously observed. But if it was intended, as seems most likely, to encourage a close and crafty spirit, and put us upon searching out the Faults of our Friends, that we may be prepared, against a  
time



*Friends to each other.*

301

SERM.

XIV.

time of expected Enmity, with weapons to annoy them ; we ought to despise it, as the mischievous invention of some ungenerous or selfish mind. We should be rather careful to contract Friendship with those who never can become our Enemies ; and if, notwithstanding our utmost Prudence, we are so unhappy as to be deceived and abused, we should rather patiently bear the misfortune, than be always suspecting and providing against a day of Enmity.

CONSIDER then again and again, whether you are to receive a man as your Friend : but, when once you have admitted him, lay aside all reserve, and converse with him as freely as with yourself. Let your Life have nothing in it, which you would be afraid your Enemies should discover ; and if there are some things, which it is not convenient that every man should know, yet be not backward to unburthen your Mind, by communicating to your Friend all your thoughts, cares and intentions. When you have tried him sufficiently, place an entire Confidence in him. To treat him with simplicity and openness of Heart, is the likeliest way to make and keep him honest  
and

SERM.

XIV.

and faithful ; whereas, if you appear to distrust him in the least, you tempt him to revenge your jealousy by Treachery and Falshood.

YET no wise man will be desirous to pry into the secrets of his Friend, which those are always forward to divulge, who are curious to know. We should rather need invitation to accept of such Trusts, than be glad to have them committed to our charge. When you are made conscious to a Secret, you may esteem it an honour to have so much Confidence placed in you ; but you run some hazard of being feared and suspected by your Friend, though you honestly keep it. The least breach of Faith, though it be about a trifle, will be highly resented, and not without good reason ; for what can betray a more base and pitiful turn of Mind, than to abuse the confidence of a Friend, merely out of an idle tattling humour ? This is represented in a lively and beautiful manner, by an apocryphal Writer. *Who so discovereth Secrets, loseth his Credit, and shall never find a Friend to his mind. Love thy Friend, and be faithful unto him, but if thou betrayest*

*Friends to each other.*

303

SERM.

XIV.

*betrayest his Secrets, follow no more after him: for as a Man hath destroyed his Enemy, so hast thou lost the love of thy Friend; as one that letteth a Bird go out of his hand, so hast thou let thy Friend go, and shalt not get him again: follow after him no more, for he is too far off, he is as a Roe escaped out of the snare. As for a Wound it may be bound up, and after reviling there may be a reconciliation; but he that betrayeth Secrets, is without hope.*

WHILE we so often choose imprudently for ourselves, it is not likely we should always know what is best for our Friends; otherwise we should be more solicitous to promote their *wisdom* and *goodness*. If these were ours to bestow, they would be the most valuable presents we could possibly make them, had we all the world at our disposal. And though God alone can implant the seeds of Goodness in our Hearts, yet has he left it in the power of our Friends to cherish them and assist their growth. They may excite in us a spirit of honest Emulation by their Examples. They may exhibit to us in their own Tempers the  
amiable



SERM.  
XIV.

amiable form of Virtue, till we, being enamoured with the fair appearance, sincerely mourn our want of Merit, and apply ourselves with more vigour to the pursuit of it. And as our temper and conduct depend entirely on the opinions we form concerning *Good* and *Evil*, our Friends may rectify these opinions by reasoning with us, and thus lead us to a right behaviour. *Lastly*, when we behave amiss, they may remind us of our Faults, expose their Deformity, and point out to us their pernicious effects.—Methinks their own interest might well excite our Friends by these methods to promote our Integrity and Virtue; if they can make us temperate, we shall make them the better Friends; if they encrease our Wisdom, they will at the same time encrease our Capacity to serve and assist them; if they can inspire us with steady principles of Gratitude, Honour and Justice, they may assuredly expect from us, grateful, just, and honourable Treatment. Upon which account one may well be surpris'd at the extream Negligence which generally prevails among us in these respects.—Indeed it is often

often owing to our own perverseness, that our Friends are not more ready to do us good. We are too apt to be offended with Reproof, however kindly meant, and prudently administered; and had rather our Friends would connive at our Faults, and suffer us to go on quietly in evil courses, than attempt to reclaim us by seasonable Admonitions. We are uneasy at that with which we ought to be pleased, and satisfied with that which should make us uneasy. To have behaved amiss gives us a little Disturbance; to be reproved for it chafes and provokes us. Thus we discourage the good offices of our Friends; whereas we ought on the contrary to grieve for our Faults, and receive Admonition, not only with mildness and patience, but also with Gratitude and Pleasure.

WERE you afflicted with some dangerous Distemper, you would accuse your Friend of unkindness, if, when he had it in his power, he would not relieve you. With much more reason might he complain of you, if you perceived his Mind inflamed with Disorders, and his conduct abounding

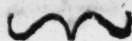
SERM.

XIV.

with Errors and Follies, without endeavouring to heal and restore him. Perhaps you are unwilling to give him pain, by taking notice of his Faults. But which do you think is the more friendly part? to prevent his ruin by plain, though disagreeable Remonstrances: or suffer him to plunge himself in Guilt and lasting Misery, because you cannot restrain him without making him uneasy for a short time? It may be, you are afraid you shall offend him to such a degree as to lose his Friendship: This I own is a hard trial; yet at the same time I cannot allow you to be above *half* a Friend, if you would not rather choose to deserve his Esteem without having it, than to have it without deserving it. In these cases, a wise and good Friend will imitate the skilful and tender Physician; he will choose with Caution, and resolutely apply the Remedies which, in his judgment, will be most effectual: only when mild and grateful Medicines will answer the end as well, he will always prefer them to those which are disagreeable and painful.

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IT is our duty then to admonish our Friends with freedom, but without bitterness, passion, or contempt: Not so much because we suffer by their misconduct, as out of a sincere regard to their own Honour and Happiness; not out of a pride in correcting, and a disposition to censure; not so as to expose their Characters, and lessen them in the opinion of others; but purely with a view to their good: and, if it be possible, in such a manner as to convince them that this is our only end. Some *times* are not so proper for Reproof, as when they are oppressed with Misfortunes or Distempers. At such seasons Humanity commands us to be assisting and comforting to them, curing their Wounds, not aggravating their Anguish. We should also be cautious, not to make ourselves intolerable to our Friends, by being severe upon them for trifling Faults; nor lose our Influence upon them, and harden them against our Admonitions, by teasing them with continual Complaints.

THUS we have endeavoured to describe some of the principal offices and duties of

SERM.

XIV.

Friendship. It is easy, you see, to lay down Rules, and heap precept upon precept. All the difficulty, as well as the Honour lies in the *practice*. To this therefore let us apply ourselves with care and diligence; remembring that as it is no contemptible Character to be a *good Friend*; so to be a *bad one* is no small and trifling Reproach.—It still remains, that we treat of the *Dissolution of Friendship*. But this we must reserve.

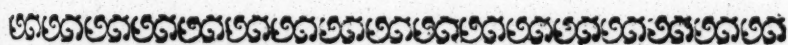


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## S E R M O N XV.

Of the DISSOLUTION of  
FRIENDSHIP.



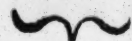
PROV. xvii. 17.

*A Friend loveth at all times.*



IN our last Discourse upon this Subject, we endeavoured to describe some of the principal Offices and Duties of Friendship, by observing which, we may happily *preserve* and *retain* our Friends. But though we use our best care and prudence, both in our choice and treatment of them, we may count upon it that Offences will now and





### *Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

then be arising. In this world of Folly and Imperfection, where both we and our Friends are subject to such a variety of humours, passions and froward Inclinations ; it were a felicity which we cannot but desire, yet which we ought not in reason to expect, that our Friendship might run forward, evenly and constantly, without any hindrance or interruption to the end of Life. Jarring notes, alas ! will disturb our Harmony : little Disgusts, Quarrels and Contentions will sometimes come between us ; and, without prudent management, will be in danger of dissolving our union, and estranging our Hearts from one another. We had as good therefore never to think of Friendship at all, unless we are resolved to prepare ourselves against these ungrateful accidents.

THE sum of all is, that we be not apt *to give*, nor hasty and implacable *in taking Offence* : That we put the most favourable construction it will bear, on the behaviour of our Friends ; rather extenuate than magnify their Faults ; and fix not our Eyes so steadily upon them, as to overlook their Merits and good Offices. When any little Difference has happened between us, we  
should

*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

311

SERM.

XV.

should be cautious not to widen the breach by passionate Accusations and keen Invectives; but shew ourselves disposed to forget it, and be sincerely reconciled. Away then with that foolish Pride, which defers a Reconciliation, out of an unwillingness to make the first advance towards it; when perhaps both parties are desirous that the Quarrel should cease, yet still it is continued, because each thinks it below him to be the *first* in appearing to desire it. A wise man, on the contrary, will esteem it honourable to him to have been before-hand with his Friend in the offers of Reconciliation; and will even be ready to seize that opportunity of giving him an undeniable evidence of his Regard for him, by surprizing him with some remarkable and important Service. Offences thus prudently managed, instead of weakning or dissolving, would rather confirm and establish our Friendship.

WERE we a little better acquainted with ourselves and our Errors, we should be more inclined to the exercise of mutual Candour and Forbearance. The best of us are not blameless, nor are those always the most free from faults, who are most confi-

SERM.

XV.

dent of their own Perfection. Would we examine our Temper and Conduct with unprejudiced minds, what perverseness, what folly, what defects of Goodness should we discover in our dispositions, words, and daily Behaviour? But these ungrateful objects we cast behind our backs, where we cannot see them; while the Faults of our Friends are carried before us, and observed with the utmost nicety. We imagine we never give them any good reason to be offended with us, and therefore exact from them a perfectly just and inoffensive treatment; whereas did we know how often we have need of excuse from them, we should hardly be so quick at discerning, or so severe in resenting the failings of our Friends.

WHEN you perceive the affection of your Friend growing cold towards you, consider as impartially as you can, whether the change is in *him*, or in *yourself*. If you find in your Temper or Conduct, any alteration for the worse, endeavour to regain his esteem, by correcting what is amiss, and removing the cause of his Indifference and Disgust. If he suspects you of Guilt, with which you  
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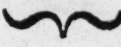


## *Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

313

SERM.

XV.

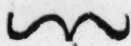


are not chargeable, take care you conform not to his jealousy, either by carelessly overlooking it, or by passionately upbraiding him with it; but try to convince him of your Integrity, by calm and affectionate reasoning. But lastly, if you are satisfied his Indifference proceeds not from any Fault of yours, but merely from the fickleness of his own humour, and a change of taste and inclination, it will be no sin to strike him out of the list of your Friends, and substitute in his room persons of greater Steadiness and Constancy.

THERE are but *two* occasions that I know of, on which it is justifiable to break off our Friendships; either when we discover in our Friends some gross deformity of manners, which till that time had been concealed from us; or when, though they were really good at the commencement of our Friendship, they afterwards become corrupt and vicious. We may often converse with a man a considerable time without being well acquainted with his Temper and true Character. As modesty may prevent the appearance of his Virtues, so policy may  
hide

SERM.

XV.



hide his Vices, and cover him with such an artful cloak of Honesty and Goodness, as shall scarcely be seen through by any, but him to whose eye nothing is impervious. Hence we may possibly be ensnared into Friendship, by those with whom we should scorn to be intimate, if we knew them thoroughly. Yet time and a longer acquaintance frequently reveal these hidden things of darkness. Their Vices may meet with such opportunities of bursting forth and shewing themselves, as that it shall not be in their power any longer to restrain them. Nature may surprize them in some unguarded moments; or after they have gained our Confidence, they may sometimes venture to throw off the mask, and boldly profess themselves to be what they really are. Upon such discoveries as these, we may, nay we ought to think of putting an end to our Friendship.

AND so also, when of *good Men*, our Friends become *evil* and *vicious*; which alas! after all our boasts of the constancy of Virtue, may sometimes happen. Indeed, if the disorders of their Minds are such as  
afford

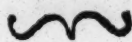
*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

315

afford any reasonable hopes that they may be cured, we should not leave them, till we have attempted to reclaim them, and restore their Virtue: for as he who is able, is obliged to drive away Poverty from the house of his Friend, much more is he obliged to expel Vice out of his mind. But if their Crimes are of a desperate kind, such as threaten the very life of the Soul, and forbid any rational hopes of Recovery, we ought to cast them off, and renounce their Friendship. We loved them before, because they were then *good* and *amiable*; but since they are now become *evil* and *base*, and are no longer the same persons, we are neither chargeable with Injustice nor Inconstancy, though we cease to love them.

SERM.

XV.

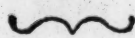


HOWEVER, unless their Vices are quite intolerable and scandalous, it may be proper not to break off our Friendship rashly, and at once; but rather to loosen the bonds of it by degrees, and sink insensibly into a state of Indifference. But here we should be sure to stop, and not suffer our Friendship to be converted (as is too commonly the case) into deadly hatred; from whence proceed



SERM.

XV.



ceed railing, calumny, mutual Reproaches and spiteful Opposition. It is highly indecent and ungenerous (except when our own Credit and Security requires it) to exercise bitter enmity against those with whom we have heretofore lived familiarly, and exchanged many kind and endearing Offices.

THESE, if I mistake not, are the only grounds upon which Friendship can be honourably dissolved. Yet there are a great variety of other Causes, which are sufficient to divide vulgar and imperfect Friends. The least opposition of Interest breeds a Quarrel. When one party sinks, or the other is raised eminently above him, the latter seems to forget his *old Friend*, and leaves him to bemoan himself in Grief and Dejection; or, if he be a man of high Spirit, to vent his passion in bitter reproaches. Yet I believe these things do not so often separate *real Friends*, as discover *false* ones; who having only counterfeited an Esteem, in order to procure some private Interest, and having now gained what they wanted, no longer make those professions of Friendship which never were sincere.

SOME

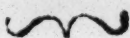
*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.* 317

SOME betray their Inconstancy for a trifling advantage; others, who are not moved by a little gain, are not able to resist a more considerable offer. And though there may be a few who scorn to desert their Friends for Money, yet where shall we find any who will not prefer Dignity, Power, and Distinction before their Friends? who when these things are proposed on one side, and the rights of Friendship on the other, will not much rather choose the former? Hence true Friendships are rarely to be met with among those who are keenly engaged in the pursuit of Offices and Honours. For where is the man that can prefer the glory of his Friend before his own? or who, that has the least spark of Ambition in him, can live in Friendship with one that rivals him in Fame and Reputation?

BUT it is still more difficult, and next to impossible for Friendship to continue, where, besides a competition of Interest, there are also contrary Sentiments concerning *right* and *wrong*. For among Friends disputes may sometimes arise, not merely whether this Estate or that Office shall be yours or mine; but which of us ought to have it in justice

SERM.

XV.



justice and equity. In this case there is no possible way for Friendship to remain firm and entire, unless, either by reasoning together, or by the Arguments of some third person, who can be brought to agree in our opinions concerning the point of right: Which, so long as they are opposite, will put an effectual stop to the course of Friendship. For it is not in our nature, nor are we any way obliged to live in Friendship with those that we are persuaded do not treat us with Honour and Justice.

DISTANCE of place, is so far from weakening or destroying the affection of Friends, that it seems rather to strengthen and improve it; so that, when they meet again after a short separation, their Joys are observed to be more lively than if they had never been asunder. But if they have been absent for a long time, and maintained no sort of correspondence with each other, their Friendship will be lost and buried in oblivion; for it is kept alive by habitual Exercise and frequent Impressions: but as time will wash out the old traces, unless new ones are now and then made, in length of Years all will vanish.



*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

319

SERM.

XV.

AND now, while our Friendships are obnoxious to many accidents, and, as it were, distempers of different kinds; if they run on without interruption to the end of Life, we may ascribe it rather to the favour of Providence, than to our own Wisdom. But though our harmony should be as compleat and uninterrupted as we could wish; yet neither will our own Prudence, nor the favour of Heaven, rescue either us or our Friends from the fatal stroke of Death. And here certainly, if any where, it is lawful to bewail the frailty of Man, and the precarious nature of all earthly and human things. Let little minds mourn over the uncertainty of Riches and worldly Grandeur; the vanity of Pleasure and inconstancy of Fame and popular Applause: A truly great and temperate man will not be much moved either at the presence or absence of these things. And when we are deprived of any, or all of them; when we are oppressed by Wickedness in power; insulted by Pride in dignity; or abused by the malice of Enemies, how unspeakably satisfying is the thought, that our Friends are still left, in whose constancy we  
may

SERM. may securely confide, and who are ready to  
 XV. share with us in all our concerns?

BUT how can we reflect without anxiety, that these very Friends themselves are mortal, and may at any time be taken from us in an instant? Or whither shall a generous spirit fly for Consolation, when Death has sealed their eyes, and deprived it of what it valued above all other external things?

THAT mind, with which I had exchanged so many Endearments, and lived in perfect union and content; that mind which was the seat of so much goodness, and the parent of so many just sentiments and worthy actions, Death has carried away from me, and left me only this empty case of flesh, good for nothing, but too feed the worms! Shall I be wholly unafflicted at such an event? Will it be any sin, if I silently drop a tear over the opening Grave? May I be allowed to feel no desire, no regret, no uneasiness? Tell me, *Philosopher*, is this true wisdom and greatness of mind? Is it not rather unnatural Refinement, or gross Stupidity and hardness of heart? If so, I am far from desiring to attain to such insensibility with,  
 what-

## *Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

321

whatever fine names you may be pleased to dignify, it. SERM.  
XV.

BUT while we avoid this, we should be cautious of running into the opposite extreme, which is more dangerous, and much less blameable. To grieve *immoderately* at the death of our Friends, is indecent and unmanly. When we see a man weeping and wailing, distracted and thrown out of the possession of himself by the violence of his passion, we pity his case; we admire the strength of his Friendship, but at the same time are persuaded of his Weakness; whereas we perfectly reverence him, who being deeply sensible of this loss, and feeling the strong emotions of Esteem and Tenderneſs, yet gives not way to the storms of Passion; but keeps himself calm; commands his Grief, and still is able to act with prudence and composure. Excessive Sorrow betrays a will obstinately bent against the divine Providence; it makes us negligent of our surviving Friends; careless about the important offices of Life; and often unfits us for the decent performance even of those Duties we owe to the dead.

VOL. II.

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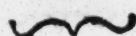
FOR we are not to look upon ourselves as immediately released from all Obligations to them, as soon as we have closed their eyes, and attended their Funeral. We ought further to cherish the memory of them and their Virtues, to fulfil their just and reasonable Desires; to defend their Reputation; to spread their Praise; and to assist and comfort their Friends and Relations. If they have left any Children, we should esteem ourselves obliged, in some measure, to supply the place of their deceased Parent, and our Friend. We should therefore take them under our Protection, and guide them by our advice; endeavour to make them wise and good, and useful in Life, and receive them to the inheritance of our Friendship, if they are not quite unworthy of it. By the pious discharge of these Duties, we shall much better exercise our regard for the dead, than by all the inward feeling, and outward expressions of extravagant Sorrow.

As a temperate Diet and manner of Life, would prevent many Diseases, which are scarcely to be cured by the art of the Physician; so a proper culture and preparation  
of

*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

323

SERM.  
XV.



of Mind, would prevent that excessive Grief, which, after it is risen, cannot be appeased by any consolations. The preparation, I mean, is, an habitual Meditation on human Frailty, and the various changes and accidents of life; which, when we have seen them coming towards us, we shall not be so dreadfully shocked at their arrival. We love our Friends so well, that we are loth to think we must ever part with them, and are so entirely wrapt up in Enjoyment, as foolishly to forget, what the least Reflection would any time tell us, that they are really mortal. Hence, when the separation comes to be made, we are surprized, astonished, confounded; which, if we had frequently considered, and actually expected, we should have born, like men, with tolerable patience. It was this enabled the Philosopher, when one brought him word, that his Son was dead, calmly to answer, *I know, that I begat him mortal.* But which of us ever dares say to himself, “I know this Friend, whom I so heartily esteem, must shortly die.”—Therefore our Hearts are torn and distracted with impetuous passions, which are rather enraged, than

*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

weakened by all the consolations our Friends can apply.

WHEN our Grief swells beyond just bounds, it is commonly encreased and heightened by some such opinions as these; that to mourn and afflict ourselves is right in itself, and what we owe to the Deceased; that with reason we lament the case of our Friends, who see no longer the light of this world, and are taken away from the enjoyments of life; or *lastly*, that, when they are seized by Death, they are fallen into some great and terrible Calamity. The *latter* we shall consider presently. As to the *first*, we must again mention, what we have lately shewn, that excessive sorrow is far from being our Duty; that it is impious, effeminate, indecent, and, upon these accounts, guilty and criminal. Nor can we surely think so meanly of our Friends, as to imagine they would be pleased, if they saw us afflict and torment ourselves upon their account.

THAT we mourn for *our own sakes*, when we are deprived of our Friends, we are ashamed to own. For whom then do we grieve but for *them*? And why for *them*?  
unless



*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

325

SERM.

XV.

unless some evil has befallen them. " Evil  
" enough, you will say, to be snatched away  
" from beholding this goodly scene, and  
" enjoying the pleasure and happiness of  
" Life." But unless you can see into Futu-  
rity, how do you know from what calami-  
ties Death may have withdrawn them? Num-  
berless are the evils and miseries of this mor-  
tal state, which we need not aggravate by  
dwelling upon them. Every one, who has  
stayed in the world awhile, has had some  
share ; and, by what he has felt, may judge  
of the rest. Nothing here is certain, but  
what is *past* ; with respect to the *future*, no  
man is so firmly established in Prosperity as  
to be assured, whether he has more reason  
to hope, or fear it. This only we may ven-  
ture to pronounce, that considering merely  
present enjoyment, it had been better for  
many if they had died sooner. It may be  
therefore it was best for our Friends to die  
when they did.

BUT the *manner* in which we are affect-  
ed upon such occasions, mainly depends on  
the opinion we entertain concerning Death.  
If we regard it, as a calamitous event to good

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men ;

men; if we have any notion, however confused, of it's being big with some shocking and dreadful Evils! our Grief must take its course, and can admit of no remedy, but length of time; which, even in this case, will soften and dissolve it. If we consider Death, as an utter extinction of all sense, as it has nothing in it joyful and glorious; so it has nothing in it greatly frightful and lamentable. But, if our Sentiments concerning it are such as are countenanced by Reason, and confirmed by Revelation; if we are really persuaded, that to die is nothing else to a good man, but to be released from this crazy and corruptible Body; and to pass out of a world, abounding with cares, and pains, and guilt, and sorrow, into a state of eternal peace, and unspeakable felicity; verily, to lament the Death of our Friends, must rather proceed from envy than affection.

WERE it in the power of Death, finally to dissolve our Friendships, we might have some pretence for melancholy complaints; but why should we mourn beyond measure, when it is not able so much as to suspend them? It is true, when our Friends are removed

*Of the Dissolution of Friendship.*

327

SERM.  
XV.

moved out of life, they can no longer assist us, nor we them. But, if they are out of the reach of our services, we ought to rejoice that they do not want them; and to grieve, because we are deprived of their's, would be mere selfishness. Though we cannot now express our regards for each other by mutual good offices; yet the most substantial part, the very life of Friendship, which consists *in loving, and being beloved*, still remains. For if there be any sense or memory of things on earth among the Blessed in heaven, we cannot doubt but the Friends they have left behind them, engage their principal attention and esteem. As for us, we cannot see or hear our departed Friends; however, they have left in our Minds the fair image of themselves and their virtues, which we may chearfully review as often as we please; from this contemplation we may at any time derive a most agreeable Enjoyment, which we may still heighten, by calling to mind the innocent and virtuous pleasures of our past Friendship.

THUS we should comfort ourselves during the short stay we are to make behind them;

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which

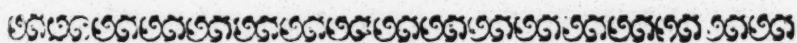


which ought not to be intolerable, because *it will be short. They shall not return to us, but we shall speedily follow them.* In a little time the faithful Messenger of God will be dispatched, to conduct us also into the same blissful seats. O happy day! transporting event devoutly to be wished for! when we shall depart out of this perplexed and tumultuous Life, and meet our Friends in the serene and peaceful Regions above! With what Joy shall we then congratulate one another! With what Pleasure look *backward* upon the various adventures of our earthly Friendship; and *forward* to an Eternity, in which we shall jointly partake of the purest and most refined satisfactions! These glorious scenes are not for me to describe; but the near prospect of them should make us patiently to bear our separation from our Friends, and chearfully to expect our own dissolution.



## S E R M O N XVI.

### The NATURE and FOUNDATION of VIRTUE.



PHILIP. iv. 8.

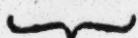
*Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things  
are true, — honest, — just, — pure,  
— lovely, — of good Report; if there  
be any Virtue, and if there be any  
Praise, think on these things.*



It is the opinion of some, that the  
Words *true, honest, just, pure, love-  
ly, and of good report*, in this Ex-  
hortation of the Apostle, were de-  
signed to express so many distinct branches  
of Virtue and Goodness, and are each of  
them

SERM.

XVI.



them to be understood in a sense something different one from another ; but I know not whether there is any sufficient ground for these Distinctions ; for it is certain, that these things which are *true*, are also *honest* and *just* ; and what is *honest* and *just*, is at the same time *pure*, *lovely*, and *of good report* : And therefore it seems more likely, that the same thing was intended by each of these words ; and that *St. Paul* only made use of such a variety of Expressions, in order to give the greater clearness, emphasis and weight to his Exhortation.—And we may observe further, that when the Apostle says, *if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise*, he does not make it a matter of doubt and question, whether there is any such thing as *Virtue* and *Worth*, or not ; but on the contrary, he asserts the reality of it in the strongest manner, and in effect appeals, concerning the point, to the Hearts and Consciences of those to whom he wrote.—The sense therefore of this passage, I take to be this ; If there be, as most certainly there is, and as you all must needs be sensible, some things which are laudable and virtuous, honest and true, just and pure, lovely and



*Foundation of Virtue.*

334

and of good report, exercise your thoughts about these things, and frequently fix your Meditations upon them.

SERM  
XVI.

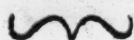
IN discoursing from these Words, we shall endeavour in the

FIRST place, to shew that there are some things laudable and virtuous, honest and lovely in Life and Manners.

II. We shall explain and enforce the Apostle's Exhortation, to *meditate on these things*, and exercise our thoughts about them.

I. WE shall endeavour to shew, that there are some things in Characters and Manners, which are *lovely, honourable and worthy of Praise*; and others, on the contrary, which are foul, hateful and detestable.—And this is evident from the general sense and concurring testimony of all Mankind, who, though they differ endlessly in Religion, Laws, Customs, and methods of Education; yet join, as with one Heart and one Voice, in applauding what is kind, generous and social: and in blaming and condemning  
Malice

Malice and Villany, Treachery and Ingratitude.



No Nation was ever heard of, however ignorant and uncivilized, which allowed not some honour to Justice and Equity, Humanity and Friendship; none so wretchedly depraved, as not to hate the malicious, the cruel and ungrateful; the Enemy to mankind and his country. The uninstructed Peasant and rude Barbarian are not destitute of this *mental Taste* and Discernment; and those, whose minds have been improved and cultivated with good instruction and discipline, acknowledge no Beauty equal to that of an honest and good Character, no Deformity like that of a bad one. What are the Characters with which History is adorned, but appeals to the sense of Mankind concerning what is graceful and noble, or foul and hateful in Actions and Manners? Wherefore are some extolled in Panegyrick, and dignified with such high praises and Encomiums, if there be nothing in itself laudable and deserving? Why are others loaden with reproaches and persecuted with keen Satyr, if there be nothing in itself reproachful and detestable? Or lastly, what ground  
can

*Foundation of Virtue.*

333

can there be for *Raillery* and *Ridicule*, if there is not in Nature a *wrong* and *ridiculous* ?

SERM.

XVI.

WAS there ever a time, when no Societies were formed, no Laws made, no Punishments threatened against Crimes and Injustice?—Yet then reason and conscience gave Law to mankind; condemning the inhuman and savage Temper, and warning to abstain from the base unrighteous Act; inclining them to esteem and love the benevolent Disposition, and to abhor and dislike whatever is impious, cruel and unjust. This law, as it derives not its force from the votes of the Multitudes, the decrees of the Senates, or the edicts of Princes; so it cannot be altered or annulled by any human power and authority. It is not engraved on Brass, nor entered in the publick records of States and Kingdoms; but it is deeply imprinted on the living tables of our hearts by the Author of our nature, and expressed in lasting and indelible characters. It cannot be heard, or any ways received by Instruction from others; but it speaks within us, and is felt and perceived by every one in his own Breast; it can no  
more



SERM. more be separated from us, than we can  
 XVI. from ourselves; it cleaves to our Souls, and  
 is no less natural to us, than any other affection and principle of our Minds.

IT is true, this *Sense* of *right* and *wrong* is not discovered in us of some time after our birth; but let no one say, it is not therefore of Nature's planting. We are born without teeth, and yet that man would justly be esteemed a Fool, who should affirm, that, for this reason, teeth are not natural; the propensity of the sexes towards each other does not appear at first; and yet I suppose no body will deny but this is natural. In like manner the seeds of modesty and shame being sown in our hearts by the God of nature, lie concealed within us for some time, but they naturally open and shoot forth with the earliest dawn of Sense and Genius. How soon do Children discover their taste of Manners, by a disinterested fondness for some of their Companions, and an invincible aversion to others? Repeat over to them some easy story, wherein are lively instances of base ingratitude, treachery and cruelty, and immediately their hearts

hearts are filled with artless Resentment and generous Indignation. With what eagerness do they contend for honour and victory, in their little Contests one with another? How do they exult with joy, when they have excelled their equals? How do they blush with shame to be outdone by them? How do they hate to be accused? How are they grieved and dispirited when they are blamed? How do they love to be praised and commended? How apt are they to remember those who bestow Favours upon them? How desirous, how glad to express their Gratitude? These things appear the most plainly in those who have the best and most fortunate Tempers, and are undeniable signs of a *natural sense* of what is *honourable* and *shameful* at this tender age.

AND when they have arrived to years of maturity, we find, they have still the same principle working within them. For where is the wretch so insensible and stupid, as not in some degree to approve and admire Honesty and Justice? Who is there in the world so unlike a man, as not to be moved with dislike and resentment against Villany  
and

SERM.  
XVI.

and Baseness? Who is not heartily offended with Treachery and Malice, though his own interest is not in the least affected by it? Nay, who, that has been brought up in an honest family, does not scorn and detest that very wickedness and knavery, which directly promotes his own Advantage? Is not folly, ignorance and weakness of Judgment poor and pitiful? Is not Cowardice unmanly and shameful? Is not Intemperance foul and abominable? Who can behold unmoved, the man that leads an impure, flagitious and debauched life? Who can endure to see obstinacy, insolence and lewdness in young persons? Who, on the contrary, does not love in that age, modesty, temperance, and gentleness of Mind? Who does not condemn and despise the crafty and dissembling, the sordid and selfish, the trifling and inconstant, the proud and impertinent? In short, where is the man living, or where did he ever live, that never felt on any occasion, nor in any degree, the amiableness of Virtue, or the deformity of Vice?

NONE are able constantly to resist these *moral Impressions*; for in what rank, profession,



feſſion, or character of human life, ſhall we find a man that never did any thing, becauſe he thought it was becoming him? The ſuperſtitious perſon and the Enthuſiaſt, how many of their actions proceed from an ill-conducted ſenſe of Duty and Conſcience? The man of gallantry and falſe Honour, though empty of ſubſtantial Goodneſs, purſues however ſome faint ſhadow and diſtant reſemblance of it. And even the diſſolute Rake, though in words he may make but a light matter of honour and Conſcience, yet is he befooled by Nature, and often led by a deluſive appearance of what is handſome and honourable. He prodigally ſpends his Fortune in ſupplying his debauched Companions with wine and luxury; and miſtaking this for Generoſity and Friendſhip, he falls in love with it, and makes it the matter of his pride and boaſting. As to the man of ſound Wiſdom and thorough Integrity, it is the very character of ſuch a one, that he does what he approves, and avoids what his mind ſuggeſts to be wrong. Ask him, and he will tell you; watch him, and you ſhall ſee, he would not do a mean and diſhoneſt

SERM.

XVI.

thing for the world ; because he hates it. Honesty, Justice and Faith he esteems such fair and noble possessions, that sooner than quit his title to them, he would undergo any hardships, expose himself to the greatest Dangers, and chearfully deny himself all other gratifications whatsoever.

THE vicious also, are frequently overpowered by Nature, and forced to confess the reality of an *honourable* and *shameful* in actions and manners. Hence that Remorse, which never fails to haunt the guilty breast, and fills the trembling wretch, conscious of ill desert, with pale Horror and dreadful Distraction. And there are scarce any to be found, even among persons of the most abandoned Characters, who do not in some degree reverence and value distinguished Worth and Goodness in others. The very compleat wretch, the thorough profligate villain, is not proof against the charms of Virtue, when presented to his eyes in a living example ; even he is constrained to admire the lovely form, and could heartily wish the Character were his own ; he sees, approves,

approves, is enamoured ; and secretly regrets his own loss of Innocence and Worth.

SERM.

XVI.

ONE would imagine, that if the human mind was not determined to prefer some actions to others, all men would take the shortest and easiest way to obtain any desired Advantage, and would always esteem that to be the best, whenever they could pursue it without fear of Punishment. But who is there, or whoever was there, of such greedy Avarice, or such unbridled Lusts, but would choose to obtain all the same Profit or Advantage, whatever it be, that he aims at, without committing any Crime, rather than with it, even though he was sure to go unpunished for committing the Crime? “Thrive, “ says the fordid soul, thrive honestly, if you “ can ; if not, yet thrive however.” Now why should the *honest way* be preferred at all ? But because there is something engaging in Honesty, and some degree of aversion, even in the worst of men, to that which is villanous and base. They are not fond of Injustice for it's own sake ; but their appetites and lusts overcome their natural reluctance to what is shameful and dishonest, and



SERM.  
XVI.

carry them to the commission of those actions, which they themselves condemn.

LET those, who in words deny all difference of right and wrong, be brought to suffer by the Insolence and Oppression of others. This is a rack which never fails to extort from them a confession of the truth, and effectually discovers the real sentiments of their Hearts, which, at other seasons, they have so weakly belyed. Upon such Occasions, how feelingly do they complain of —

Th' Oppressor's wrong, the proud Man's  
Contumely,

The Insolence of Office, and the spurns,  
That patient Merit of th' Unworthy takes.

With what bitterness do they then exclaim against Wrong and Injustice? Then, “ why  
“ does the thunder of God sleep, and not  
“ burst upon the heads of their unjust Oppressors, and vindicate their cause with immediate Vengeance? Can Heaven, can  
“ men see them thus injured and not resent  
“ it? Miserable state! wretched world! say  
“ they, in which Merit is trampled under  
“ foot,

*Foundation of Virtue.*

341

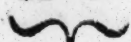
SERM.  
XVI.

“foot, and such monstrous crimes suffered  
“to escape with Impunity.” Under these  
circumstances might we not be reasonably  
allowed just to remind them, that upon their  
principles all this dismal noise and claspur  
is soundly ridiculous and impertinent; for if  
(as they maintain) there really is no such  
thing as *Crime* or *Merit*; nothing in itself  
honourable or base; why do they resent the  
harm they have received? Why do they  
complain? Why do they expect, that either  
God or Man should take their part, and  
come in to their assistance.

BUT these idle opinions are sufficiently  
confuted by the common practices of the  
world, and the daily Intercourse of human  
life. Is it not the work of almost every  
hour to approve and condemn, to praise and  
censure, to pronounce this handsome and  
becoming, that odious and shameful? A-  
bout what do mankind more frequently  
disagree and quarrel, than about questions  
of right and wrong, just and unjust? And  
yet every dispute of this kind plainly sup-  
poses an apprehension of Right and Wrong  
in each of the contending parties. Besides,  
if there is nothing in it's own nature wor-

SERM.

XVI.



thy and excellent, Piety and Friendship are empty names; for, if Piety be any thing, it is a high veneration for the best of Beings; if Friendship is any more than a sound, it is the mutual esteem of virtuous persons, who are well acquainted with each other's manners and temper. But how can we reverence and love the sovereign Mind, or how can we sincerely esteem any of our fellow-Creatures, unless there is something in Minds and Characters, which is in itself, and it's own Nature, venerable, lovely and worthy of praise?

OUR taste for *manners* and a *temper*, insinuates itself in some measure into almost all the affections and motions of our Hearts. Whatever we admire as decent and agreeable in the voice and countenance, or in the habits and gestures of the Body, has more in it of this moral kind than we are apt to imagine. That which is visible in the looks and actions, is then approved or disliked in the highest degree, when it is conceived to express some invisible Beauty, or inward Deformity. Every one hates the Face which is clouded with Ill-nature and Sullenness; whose eyes dart forth Haughtiness and Scorn; and



*Foundation of Virtue.*

343

SERM.  
XVI.

and whose Forehead is hardened with Impudence and Conceit. And yet, who is not sensible, that ill-nature, impudence and scorn are qualities of the Mind, and Crimes of which the *material part* is entirely innocent. Some are charmed with the majestick, others with the gentle Air and Feature; and all are delighted with the serene, good-tempered and modest Countenance. And yet we all know well enough, that these graces reside in the *Soul*, and cannot possibly belong to mere *Flesh* and *Blood*.

THERE is scarce a passion of our Minds, which has not in it some mixture of these *moral Sentiments*. How often do persons mourn, or seem at least to mourn the loss of their Friends, because they think it becomes them at such Seasons to afflict themselves? How greatly are Joy, and Grief, and Envy strengthened by an opinion that we do right and well in being thus affected? When are we angry; and at what? Not at an accident or chance *burt*, unless we are quite mad; but only when we imagine ourselves to be injured or affronted. If therefore a sense of Injury and Justice is not natural, then neither can Anger be natural.

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SERM.

XVI.

In like manner, why are we ashamed; or of what? Not of pains and losses. These things may excite our grief and fear, but but can never raise a blush. Of what then are we ashamed? Perhaps of that which we imagine will expose us to ridicule, censure, and contempt. But how could we be afraid of ridicule and contempt, unless we are sensible of something in it's own nature *mean* and *contemptible*? This however is not to be really ashamed, but to feign a modesty through fear of appearing to be impudent. Of what then, I ask again, are we really ashamed? Or when may we be said truly to blush? Never, but when we are conscious to ourselves of something in our Temper or Conduct, that is, in our own opinion, odious and shameful. Again, what is Pride, but too high an opinion of one's own Merit? How then can any one be *proud*, if there be no such thing as *Merit*, *Honour* and *Dignity*? All self-esteem supposes self-worth, either real or imaginary; but if Worth be really nothing, self-esteem must vanish of course, and Pride and Humility are words without meaning. And thus, so long as we see men angry, proud,

or

or ashamed, we may safely conclude, that there is an honourable and dishonourable, a foul and fair, in minds and manners; that all men feel, and are sensible of it; that the impression is derived from Nature, and can never be entirely destroyed, or rooted out.

IN the judgments we form concerning the sentiments of others, there is always some possibility that we may be mistaken. They may perhaps dissemble, and pretend to admire what they really do not. They may feign to praise and approve Virtue, only with a view to engage others in promoting their interest; and rail at Vice, not because it appears to them odious and deformed, but because they themselves would be great sufferers by the general practice of it. But be that as it will, it is absolutely impossible you should be deceived with respect to your *own* sentiments; for if you are not sure of what you feel within yourselves, you can be sure of nothing. To you then I now appeal, and refer myself entirely to the motions and sentiments of your own Hearts.—Does not a warm and generous Indignation kindle in your Breasts, when you see or hear of instances



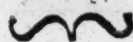


stances of Cruelty and Injustice, Faithlessness and Ingratitude? Do not you sincerely detest and abhor the Enemy of his Country; the dissembling Villain; the false Friend, and unnatural Relation? Could the power and greatness, the guards and armies of a triumphing Tyrant, ever extort from you that esteem and reverence which you willingly pay to Virtue, when distressed and suffering?

WHEN you converse with the shining characters of good men long since dead, and peruse the histories of their great actions, how are you then affected? Call to your remembrance how you were moved, when you read or heard of any thing that was done piously, gratefully, or with a great and generous soul. Do not the sentiments of Approbation and Applause force themselves irresistibly upon you on these occasions, and rise up into a secret and pleasing veneration for persons and characters of distinguished worth? Do not you love the generous and disinterested Patriot; the just Magistrate; the honest industrious Citizen, and the constant Friend? Do not you reverence  
the

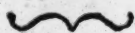
the founders of States ; the inventors of useful Arts ; those who have taught mankind to live like Brethren, and united them in regular Societies by laws calculated for a common good and interest ; and in short all who have willingly contributed to render your Fellow-Creatures a flourishing and happy race of Beings?

SERM.  
XVI.



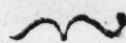
THE best of men may have their Blemishes, but that which is *divine* is always and wholly good. Such were the dispositions and conduct of our blessed Redeemer, whose purity, goodness and exalted virtue confessed his *heavenly original*. Did you ever consider the strength of that piety and benevolence, which brought him down from the glory and happiness of Heaven, to converse with sinful men, and share in human evils, without admiring the *Godlike Person*? View him, with unwearied constancy pursuing the generous design of rescuing mankind from wretchedness and Ruin ; undaunted by the greatest Difficulties, and not shrinking at the certain prospect of a violent and painful Death ! and then say, if you can, that nature has left you indifferent, as to Dispositions and Characters, and not  
given

SERM. given you a sense of what is *amiable, good,*  
 XVI. *and self-worthy.*



NOR is the world yet grown so degenerate, so barren of all excellence, as not still to produce some, whose characters you may contemplate with a pleasing assent and approbation. Is there not in your neighbourhood, or within the circle of your acquaintance, a *few* at least, whose honesty and integrity recommends them to every one's Trust and Confidence; whose generous Benevolence influences them to employ their abilities for the advantage of Mankind, and interests all around them in their good wishes and kind offices? *Some*, who are true and faithful to their engagements; sincere, steady, and disinterested in their Friendships? *Some*, who receive favours with gratitude, and confer them without expecting any other return, than the joyful consciousness of having acted a worthy and generous part? *Some*, who value Riches, not as the means of procuring private pleasures; but chiefly, as they are the support of Liberality and Beneficence, and enable them to assist their necessitous Relations, Friends and Neighbours? *Some*, who cannot see another injured





jured and oppressed without feeling a noble and just Resentment, nor be witnesses to the distresses and griefs of their Fellow-Creatures, with careless looks and unconcerned hearts? If these qualities appear separate and distinct in any of your acquaintance, I am bold to say, they give them a noble grace and dignity in your eyes; and wherever they are united in one character, and joined with a sound judgment, and well exercised reason, fail not of gaining your entire approbation. And if you are honoured with an intimate Friend or near Relation of such a character, so strong and lively will you feel this Affection, that the bare remembrance of him and his Virtues, will be sufficient to relieve you in a dull and melancholy hour, and to make you chearful and well pleased in almost any circumstances.

BUT never are we made more thoroughly sensible of a *fair* and *foul*, a *beautiful* and *deformed* in actions and manners, than when we turn our eyes inward upon ourselves, and review the motions and affections of our own hearts. Let me entreat you then for once, to read over those accounts of your past behaviour, which are registered in  
your

SERM.  
XVI.

your memories ; and to act the part of honest criticks upon yourselves, without fear or favour. Can you, did you ever reflect upon any thing unkindly, ungenerously done by you, without being soundly mortified upon that account ? Did you ever consider yourselves as unjust, malicious, cruel or ungrateful in any one instance, without blaming and disliking yourselves for it ; Ill-nature, Malignity and Moroseness, render you an object disagreeable and odious in your own eyes ; and whatever momentary ease you may have found in gratifying the bitter unsocial passions, it is always succeeded by distemper and torment : No sooner does the passion cool, than the mind sickens, nauseates itself, and would gladly forget what was acted in this untoward Bent.

AND it is to be hoped, we have none of us been such entire strangers to Goodness, as not to be able to reflect upon some parts and scenes of past life, which have been performed and conducted with decency and propriety ; upon some actions, which like fair and lovely children, gave us joy at their birth, and whenever we review them, fill our silent breasts with exquisite delight. Did  
you

*Foundation of Virtue.*

351

SERM.

XVI.



you ever feel *virtuous motion*, and exercise a generous affection towards mankind, and not thoroughly approve your being thus affected? Were you ever touched with Humanity, Gratitude, or Friendship, without liking yourselves the better for it? Name, if you can, one instance, wherein, from truly generous principles, you have obliged a Friend, or forgiven an Enemy; one instance, wherein you have assisted a Neighbour, or relieved Innocence in distress, out of pure kindness and compassion, without being amply rewarded by your own applauding heart? Never did you reject and scorn dishonest gain, when solicited by your own convenience, and the infallible assurance of the deepest Secrecy, and afterwards repent of your sincere and obstinate honesty. Never did you abate in point of ease or pleasure, in order to serve Mankind, your Friends, or Families, without having your loss abundantly compensated by the satisfaction you receive in reflecting on such a conduct.— In a word, never did you consider yourself as upright and just, honest and good, wise and temperate, without honouring your own character,



SERM.  
XVI.

character, and valuing yourself on account of these fair and worthy qualities.

UPON the whole then, I think it is evident, that whoever will look narrowly into the lives of men, and consult the sentiments of his own heart, will find, that God has given to every one a *sense of right and wrong*; and inspired us all with *natural, unavoidable notions of an honourable and base; a lovely and deformed, in Minds and Characters.*

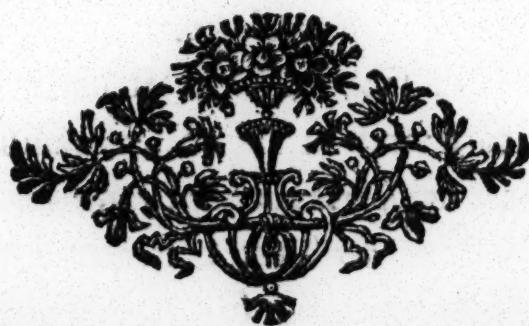
AND now, if one kind of actions and pursuits be really preferable to another; if there are some qualities, tempers and manners in themselves honourable, handsome and becoming; and others, on the contrary, in their own nature, base, odious and shameful, let us all be concerned that our own be the best. How fondly do we admire, how earnestly do we pursue whatever appears decent and beautiful in things without us. How many arts are daily employed in order to entertain our eyes, and supply us with ornaments for *Houses, Furniture and Dress*? What care is taken to adorn the *Body*? Graceful motions  
and

and gestures are studied, a handsome mein and regular features desired; and every thing unseemly and indecent with great industry removed and corrected. Every where is *Beauty* sought after, but *within ourselves*. Here only is it neglected, where it is most perfect in kind, and of highest value. For not the blushing rose, the sparkling diamond, nor all the grace of blooming youth; but why do I mention such trifling objects? Not the morning or evening star, bright sun, or silver moon, is half so admirable and lovely, as a *wise, temperate and steady mind*; a *modest, just and generous* temper. Here then let us labour, here let us employ our utmost care and attention, in polishing and refining our *spiritual part*, and rendering our *souls*, i. e. *ourselves* better and more excellent. Let us not suffer our minds, which are capable of exhibiting the truest beauty, to be naked of all ornament, to grow wild and waste for want of culture, and to abound with what is hideous, horrid and uncomely. Let us not remain content to be to ourselves, at all times, an offensive and disagreeable spectacle; but

SERM.

XVI.

SERM. learn to admire, and study to obtain that  
XVI. harmony of heart, that beauty of character,  
and consistency of manners which will  
make us satisfied with ourselves, and constantly afford us an object of most pleasing  
Contemplation.

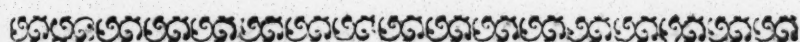






## S E R M O N XVII.

MOTIVES to the Pursuit of universal  
VIRTUE.



PHILIP. iv. 8.

*Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things  
are true, — honest, — just, — pure,  
— lovely, — of good Report; if there  
be any Virtue, and if there be any  
Praise, think on these things.*



IN a former Discourse on this  
subject; FIRST, We have en-  
deavoured to shew, that there  
are some things in Characters  
and Manners, which are *lovely, honourable,  
and worthy of Praise*. And we proceed now,  
in the SECOND place, to explain and enforce

the Apostle's exhortation, to *meditate on these things*, and exercise our thoughts about them.

AND this, in general, seems to be intended by the Precept; "Call home your views  
 " and attention from every thing that is  
 " mean, despicable, and unworthy of praise;  
 " as from popular applause, riches, or sensual  
 " enjoyments: and fix your eyes intensely  
 " and steadily upon truth, honesty, justice,  
 " purity, and all those qualities of a rational Soul which are virtuous and lovely.  
 " Propose to yourself, and represent strongly  
 " ly to your mind, dignity, honour, and inward character; wherever you are, and  
 " whatever you are about, let these sentiments constantly attend you, and abide  
 " with you. Never suffer them to slip out  
 " of your Memory through carelessness and  
 " stupidity; nor to be driven out of your  
 " heads by your giddy fancies, by the impressions of sensible objects, or the tumults  
 " of violent passions. Meditate and reason  
 " within yourself about those things, which  
 " are in themselves amiable and excellent;  
 " and steadfastly contemplate whatever is  
 " beau-

*of universal Virtue.*

357

“ beautiful and becoming in *Minds* and  
“ *Manners*.”

SERM.  
XVII.

REST not satisfied with general views only of honesty and goodness, but frequently refresh your Souls by reflecting on the several particular Virtues, and conversing much with them. And, that you may pursue these Exercises with the greater ease and advantage, endeavour to settle in your Minds clear and distinct notions, wherein they, each of them, consist. Have always ready at hand some short and comprehensive description of those qualities, which are laudable and becoming. Remember, that *Justice* is a sincere and genuine Affection for all mankind, influencing to a regular discharge of all the offices of a social life. That *Piety* is a high veneration for the *Sovereign Mind*, and an entire complacency in that series of events, which is ordered and disposed by the Divine Providence. That *Fortitude* consists in a firm resolution to adhere to virtue and integrity, in spite of losses, pains, and dangers. That to be *prudent*, is to understand divine and human things; and to make, on all occasions, the most probable choice of those things which

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are



are best and most convenient. That to be *temperate*, is to despise all unmanly pleasures, to govern our passions, and to be free from every unchast or ambitious desire. That *Friendship* is the mutual esteem of virtuous men; and *Modesty*, a deep sense of what is amiable or base. And when, after this manner, you have established clear and determinate conceptions of those qualities, which are *worthy and good*, let your thoughts dwell frequently upon them; often place them full before your eyes, and review them attentively upon every proper occasion.

AND here you will have need of very great caution, and a vigorous use of your reasoning powers, to prevent you from fixing your views on some faint shadows, and delusive appearances of virtue and worth. How many are there in the world, who mistake an abject flattery, and slavish dread of the *Divine Being*, for genuine Piety and Religion? How many are there, who practise a tedious round of formal complaisance, and a mean condescension to the humours of others, from a persuasion that this is to be truly good-tempered and benevolent? How often

often is the crafty pursuit of sensual pleasure, unworthily dignified with the honourable name of Temperance? Art and cunning, employed to attain some sordid end, assumes to itself the title of Prudence. Temerity and outrageous passion loves to be called Bravery and manly Spirit. An anxious fear of the ill opinion of others, passeth with many for Modesty; Avarice is termed frugality; and Profuseness, generosity and openness of heart. In short, every thing virtuous and good has its Counterfeit, which, by its specious resemblance draws the attention, and captivates the hearts of the rash and thoughtless. And therefore when the Apostle exhorts to *think*, and reason about what is *honest, lovely, and of good report*, might he not intend this also among other things? “When you are struck  
“with the sudden appearance of something  
“honourable and beautiful, suspend your assent for a while; yield not hastily to the  
“first impression; but obstinately withstand  
“it, ’till, by the diligent use of your reason,  
“you have sifted it thoroughly, examined it  
“on every side, and thus are fully satisfied  
“whether it is true and genuine, or only  
“spurious and false.”

*Motives to the Pursuit*

YOU may also exercise your sense of what is *fair* and *foul* in actions and manners, *by reviewing your own past temper and behaviour.* Preserve in your mind a just and faithful history of the life you have hitherto lived, and employ your leisure hours in freely examining and reading it over. Here, if you can happily discover any offices that have been discharged with integrity; any actions, which you have performed worthily and well, enjoy them over again; let your mind feast upon them afresh; and say to yourself, oh! that I may always behave in the same handsome manner upon every like occasion. And, when you observe any stains and blemishes in your past temper and conduct, take care you do not too easily excuse yourself, and shuffle them over with too much haste. It will be much better for you, though you may think it a very ungrateful business, to examine them thoroughly; and judge them as severely as we usually do the faults and crimes of those we hate. Dare therefore, as often as you deserve them, to hear such censures, as these, from your own mouth: “ Upon such or such an occasion my tem-



“ per was not right ; how indecent was this  
“ behaviour ? How inexcusable was that pas-  
“ sion ? How mean and unworthy of a Man  
“ was that desire ? — God preserve me from  
“ ever being guilty of the like again ! ”

YET be not so taken up with what is  
past, as to forget attending to the present  
state of your own Mind. Often ask, and  
answer yourself : “ What kind of Soul do I  
“ now carry about with me ? Is it that of a  
“ trifling child, a rash and giddy youth, a ti-  
“ morous creature, a greedy or savage beast ?  
“ Or is it really of a wise and manly charac-  
“ ter ? Is my Heart sound and honest at the  
“ bottom ? or am I only dressed in a specious  
“ *shew* to serve a turn, and deceive the world ?  
“ Could I be content that my present tem-  
“ per, and the secret wishes I indulge, should  
“ be known to all men ? How do I now stand  
“ affected towards GOD ? How towards my  
“ enemies ? How to my parents, my relations,  
“ my domestics, and my friends ? If any  
“ of them stood in the way between me and  
“ a large estate, should I not be inwardly  
“ pleased to see them removed, or knocked  
“ on the head ? Am not I frightened when I  
“ think

SERM.

XVII.

“ think of Death as near and certain ? Could  
 “ I now remain calm and good-natured, if  
 “ I was injured or affronted ? Could I view  
 “ a large heap of Gold with an indifferent  
 “ eye ? Could I see my neighbour rising  
 “ above me in wealth and reputation, with-  
 “ out an envious thought ? ” — After this  
 manner converse daily with yourself, strictly  
 guard the avenues to your Heart, and suffer  
 nothing to enter in there unobserved, or to  
 stay there unexamined.

ANOTHER method of contemplating what  
 is honourable and base, *is narrowly to in-  
 spect the Minds and Manners of those among  
 whom you live,* Observe not so much their  
 professions, and more public behaviour,  
 where they suspect the eyes and opinions of  
 one another, as their domestic and more pri-  
 vate conduct ; where they are less subject  
 to outward restraints, and can follow their  
 own inclinations with greater freedom. En-  
 deavour to penetrate into their Hearts, and  
 to learn their tempers, their wishes, the  
 springs that move them, and the ends they  
 pursue. Look round about you among your  
 familiar acquaintance, and remark the mo-  
 desty of one, the mildness and steady good  
 nature

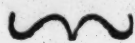
nature of another, the sincerity and liberality of a third. You may take notice also of what is black and deformed in the Characters of those you converse with. Consider the fierce and savage, the soft and effeminate, the childish and delicate, the beastly, the foolish, the crafty, and the like: only remember always to take along with you *these three cautions*; *first*, that you be not diverted by this attention to the affairs of others, from looking well to your own Soul. *Again*, that you carefully guard against all hatred and bitterness to their persons, whose manners you dislike. And *lastly*, that you keep to yourself the observations and discoveries you may make. For this exercise is designed only to improve your own Mind, and not to furnish you with opportunities either of displaying your taste, or gratifying a spiteful humour.

MEDITATE also on the Examples and worthy qualities of great and good Men who *are now removed into a better life*; whether they are such as you yourselves have personally known, or those whose virtuous actions are celebrated in history. The sacred  
Writings



SERM.

XVII.



Writings will furnish you with instances enough of this latter kind. Reflect on the singular Integrity of *Noah*, the invincible Piety of *Abraham*, the Charity of *Joseph*, the Meekness of *Moses*, the Friendship of *Jonathan*, the Patience of *Job*, and the undaunted Fortitude of *Daniel*. Above all, let your thoughts dwell much upon the character of our BLESSED SAVIOUR, which was compleat in every virtue. Consider that calmness of Spirit with which he received the greatest Indignities, and the most inhuman Treatment; that greatness of Mind, which raised him above every thing that is commonly esteemed Glorious and Good; that truly pious and devout Affection, with which he embraced every thing that was appointed by his heavenly Father; that more than human Virtue, which influenced him to make the Good of mankind the sole End of his life, and to devote himself voluntarily to Death for their eternal Happiness and Salvation. Behold here a Spectacle that deserves your attention; a Character highly worthy of your serious and frequent Meditation.

LASTLY,

LASTLY, When by such Exercises as these, you have acquired a just taste, and diligently improved your relish for what is fair and venerable in Minds and Manners; then, and not till then, are you duly prepared for raising your thoughts to the Excellencies of the *Divine Nature*. All Beauty proceeds from God, and in him resides in the most perfect manner. Whatever Excellencies we observe in other Spirits, descended to them from the Father of Spirits. All Virtue, all Praise, all honourable and lovely Qualities are but as Streams flowing from this pure, this eternal, this inexhausted Fountain. Let us then follow them up to their final Source. Hither let us raise and exalt our views. Here let them rest, and go no further. Here let us fix our Minds in steady and intense Contemplation, *viz.* upon that Nature, which is all lovely, and supremely fair!

I AM sensible, there are some persons, who are almost utterly incapable of these Studies, which we would now recommend. They, whose views have been long intent upon Earth only, and earthly things, can have  
but

SERM.  
XVII.

Gal. v.  
17.

but a faint and obscure discernment of that, which is spiritual and divine. *The Flesh*, says the Apostle, *lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.* And truly the inconsistency and opposition between them is much greater, and more direct, than most men are aware of. The impure Mind can hold no communion with purity and goodness. The lusts of the flesh, and love of gross pleasures, impair and weaken all the finer principles and affections of our nature; they clog the Soul, pinion it's wings, and make it unable to raise itself to the contemplation of GOD and Virtue. He that is immersed in sensuality, and wholly employed in procuring and feeling a constant succession of the most exquisite bodily sensations, will soon lose his relish for higher and more refined objects; and become, in a great measure, insensible of the Beauty of minds and manners. The covetous Wretch, that sits brooding over the wealth he possesseth, and contriving crafty schemes to fetch in more, has a Mind too narrow to admit one generous Sentiment, too mean to be engaged



gaged in considering what is laudable and good. He, whose head abounds night and day with giddy fancies of external pomp and splendor, has devoted himself to another kind of Beauty, and will hardly be persuaded to turn his thoughts upon those things, which are just, honest, and lovely. In short, it would be vain to expect, that any one, who has not a free Spirit, a pure and upright Heart, should ever apply himself to study and meditate upon Worth and Goodness; since these meditations must needs disturb his quiet, and fill his Mind with bitter mortification.

BUT to an innocent and virtuous Man, what can be more agreeable, what more entertaining, than to contemplate the Beauty of minds and characters? Every work, either of art or nature, which is fair and well-proportioned, affects the surveying Mind with joy and pleasure. It is glorious to behold the vault of Heaven thick set with Stars, or to observe the rising Sun and opening Morn. Why is the Spring more enlivening and pleasant, than the other Seasons; but because Nature is then more beautiful?

SERM.

XVII.

tiful? Why are we delighted with the various Landscape, the flowery Plain, or blooming Tree, but because they are beautiful? And surely the Grace of virtuous manners, the Dignity of a wise and honest heart, the Lustre of just and generous actions, are not less real than the beauties of material objects; and whoever will try, shall find, that the contemplation of them is not attended with less delight.

How sincere and exquisite the satisfaction is, we may learn by considering the state of our Mind, when we see and converse with an intimate Friend. Scarce ever are we more happy, and better pleased, than upon such occasions. The very presence of one, whom we heartily esteem, is enough to dispel any ordinary gloom of cares and sorrows, and suddenly inspires our Hearts with cheerfulness and good humour. Now to what is this owing? You will not say, that the sound of his voice, or the mere colour and features of his face, can ever have such force, as to produce this wonderful and happy effect. Whence then does it proceed? Or what is the true cause of such unusual delight

light and entire satisfaction? Why, it is, if not only, yet at least chiefly this; our grateful admiration of a *Mind*, or of something that seems expressive of a *Mind*: it is the impression of somewhat apprehended agreeable and beautiful in his manners and temper, that delights, charms, and makes us happy. And if the sight of what is handsome and lovely in a human Soul, is so delightful and powerfully entertaining, what divine joys must he feel, who is employed in viewing the compleat form of Honesty and Virtue, or in admiring the perfection of the Sovereign Mind!

SERM.

XVII.

IF you compare the delight arising from the study of Virtue and good manners, with the other enjoyments of Life, you will find few that are equal, none that are superior to it. The impressions of sensual pleasure, some-how confound and disturb the Soul, and hinder the free use of our rational Powers. Besides, they can never be enjoyed, in any tolerable degree, without lively sensations of previous pain: but the pleasure that is felt, while we meditate on those things which are honest, lovely, and just, is purchased by no antecede-





dent uneasiness, and occasions no disorder no confusion within. Immoderate passions ruffle and discompose the Soul, as storms do the sea; —and the pleasures of indulging them constitute the unenvied tumultuous happiness of a mad-man. But, when the charms of Virtue and moral Beauty strike the sense, and are clearly discerned by the well affected Mind; like the rays of the Sun falling upon the still and motionless waters, they enliven and warm it without destroying it's calmness and serenity. Other things, which are fine and beautiful, are of a mutable inconstant nature, and may either fade away themselves, or be removed from our view: But God and Justice, Wisdom and Virtue, are eternal and unchangeable; and the amiableness of these objects cannot be concealed or hid from the Mind, by any thing but the Mind itself. We have it in our power to reflect upon them, and converse with them whenever we please. These are exercises, from which nothing can debar us, besides our own inclination.

AND as these Meditations on what is venerable and lovely, are immediately attended with pure and serene satisfaction; so they have

*of universal Virtue.*

371

SERM.  
XVII.

have also the most happy effects on the disposition of the mind, and naturally tend to procure us a great many valuable and lasting advantages. An habitual attention to Honesty, Virtue, and the beauty of Manners will secretly charm the passions to sleep, and allay all extravagant and rude commotions. It prevents ill-nature and fullness, and works off every thing that is rugged, boisterous and fierce. It polishes and refines the temper; inspires it with modesty and mildness; and strengthens all friendly and social dispositions. Such is the force of what is beautiful and just, when it is frequently reviewed and considered with attention.

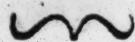
AND by a diligent study and thorough examination of what is honourable and worthy of praise, we may also acquire that correct taste and steadiness of judgment, which alone can render our minds and lives uniform and consistent. All men have a natural sense of right and wrong, honour and shame; but few are concerned to manage it aright, and make a just application of it to particular cases and circumstances. The greatest part fondly admire and hastily em-

brace the first appearance of Honour and Goodness, which either falls in their way by chance, or is suggested to them by their teachers, friends and companions: And, if this appearance happens to be false, as it is great odds it will, they worship an idol for a God, and eagerly pursue some painted Vice or splendid Vanity to the entire neglect of real excellence and worth. Hence it is, that minds which are naturally disposed to Piety and Religion, are so often ensnared by superstition and enthusiasm; and hence those who admire generosity, are too apt to overshoot their mark, and incur the dishonour of extravagance and profuseness. And though such persons may possibly enjoy their delusion for awhile, and fancy themselves possessed of no small excellence and merit; yet it is much, if at one time or another, they do not discover their mistake, and find, that they have busied themselves in pursuing an empty phantom of Honour and Virtue. Whenever this happens, it must needs occasion grief and disappointment, a miserable perplexity of thought, and a mortifying dislike of their past conduct and pursuits: And therefore,



as it is no ordinary and mean qualification, so SERM.  
neither is it of trifling importance to the XVII,  
happiness of life, to be able to distinguish  
what is truly honourable and genuine in ac-  
tions and manners, from that which is only  
specious and counterfeit. Now this quali-  
fication, whatever be it's value, can only be  
obtained by cautiously guarding against haf-  
ty approbation, and diligently examining e-  
very thing which offers itself to us under  
the notion of virtuous and good.

ANOTHER benefit arising from the prac-  
tice of meditating upon those things which  
are honest, lovely and just, is, that by this  
means our relish and affection for them will  
be daily encreasing. Such as the imagina-  
tions are, which we frequently entertain,  
such also will be the dispositions of our soul:  
For as a vessel receives a tincture from that  
which is poured into it; so likewise the  
mind is tinctured and stained by it's own o-  
pinions and fancies. If we suffer our thoughts  
to dwell much upon trifles, we shall soon  
contract an impertinent and childish temper;  
by conversing only with low and worthless  
objects, we shall gradually acquire a mean  
and abject frame of mind; if our views are



immoveably fixed upon riches, pleasures or distinction, these will quickly steal into our hearts, and engross our affections. But, if we constantly propose to ourselves Honesty and Goodness, we shall of course become better and more honest; if our meditations are chiefly employed about justice, wisdom, piety and temperance, our love for these fair and beautiful qualities will be continually encreasing; if we converse much with God and Virtue, with spiritual and divine things, we shall gradually contract a divine and god-like temper, and happily experience a growing relish for what is heavenly and spiritual. And thus at last, by these exercises we shall be duly prepared for the exalted joys and refined satisfactions of the heavenly world.

WHATEVER happiness the sensualists may propose to themselves from their pleasures; the covetous from their wealth; or the ambitious from their honours, in this present life; yet when their *Bodies* shall be taken from them, and their *Minds* be turned naked out of these earthly dwellings, they must at once bid an eternal farewell to all those enjoyments. Their riches must descend to others; their honours will not follow

follow them through the valley of death ; and since nothing can yield satisfaction to a pure unembodied spirit, but that which is of a *mental* and *spiritual* nature, it is impossible that any *soul*, which knows no good besides that which is conveyed to it through flesh and sense, should find any good beyond the grave, in which flesh and sense are buried. Agreeably to this the Scriptures inform us, that the spirits of just men shall hereafter be made happy, not by any of these gross enjoyments, but by the *vision* of GOD. *Blessed are the pure in heart*, says our Saviour, *for they shall see GOD*. By which we are not to understand, that they shall then see GOD with their eyes, as they now see material objects ; for then neither shall the soul have need of eyes ; nor in this sense hath any man seen GOD at any time, nor can see him, because he is a *spirit*. But by *seeing* GOD, is meant, that they shall be more fully acquainted with the divine excellence, and made happy in the contemplation and love of his all-glorious and perfect nature. And if the joys of immortality are indeed of this kind, vain must be all our hopes to obtain them, unless we cultivate a taste for what

Mat. v. 8.



SERM.  
XVII.

what is excellent, divine and lovely in minds and characters. For how can we be happy in conversing with the perfections of the sovereign mind, if we have no sense of the *Beauty of Minds*? And how can we have any relish for what is beautiful in minds, so long as our thoughts are engaged by different objects, and never at all employed about it? While this is the case, it were as impossible for us to taste the refined delights of Heaven, as for the deaf to be entertained with the harmony of sounds, or the blind with the works of art and nature in the material world.

AND now to conclude; as we value the purest and best enjoyments in this present life; as we are concerned to improve ourselves in divine and worthy qualities, in piety and friendship, in the love of goodness, and in a just discernment of men and manners; and *finally*, as we desire to be happy in the eternal world, let us comply with the Apostle's exhortation, and frequently fix our admiring thoughts upon those things which are true and just, virtuous and lovely.

*The END of the SERMONS.*

# P R A Y E R S

SUITED TO THE

## Following Occasions:

V 1 Z.

- |                                                                   |   |                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I. A PRAYER used in the<br>Beginning of PUBLIC<br>WORSHIP.        | ✠ | V. A PRAYER used after<br>SERMON.                                            |
| II. Another on the same.                                          | ✠ | VI. Part of a PRAYER for<br>a <i>General Fast</i> .                          |
| III. A PRAYER used be-<br>fore SERMON, in the<br><i>Morning</i> . | ✠ | VII. A PRAYER for a<br>GOOD MAN under the<br>Apprehensions of <i>Death</i> . |
| IV. Another before SER-<br>MON, in the <i>Afternoon</i> .         | ✠ | And,                                                                         |
|                                                                   | ✠ | VIII. A PRAYER for the<br>Use of a FAMILY.                                   |

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By the late REVEREND

Mr. *J O H N H O L L A N D*,

AUTHOR of two SERMONS ON INTEMPERANCE.

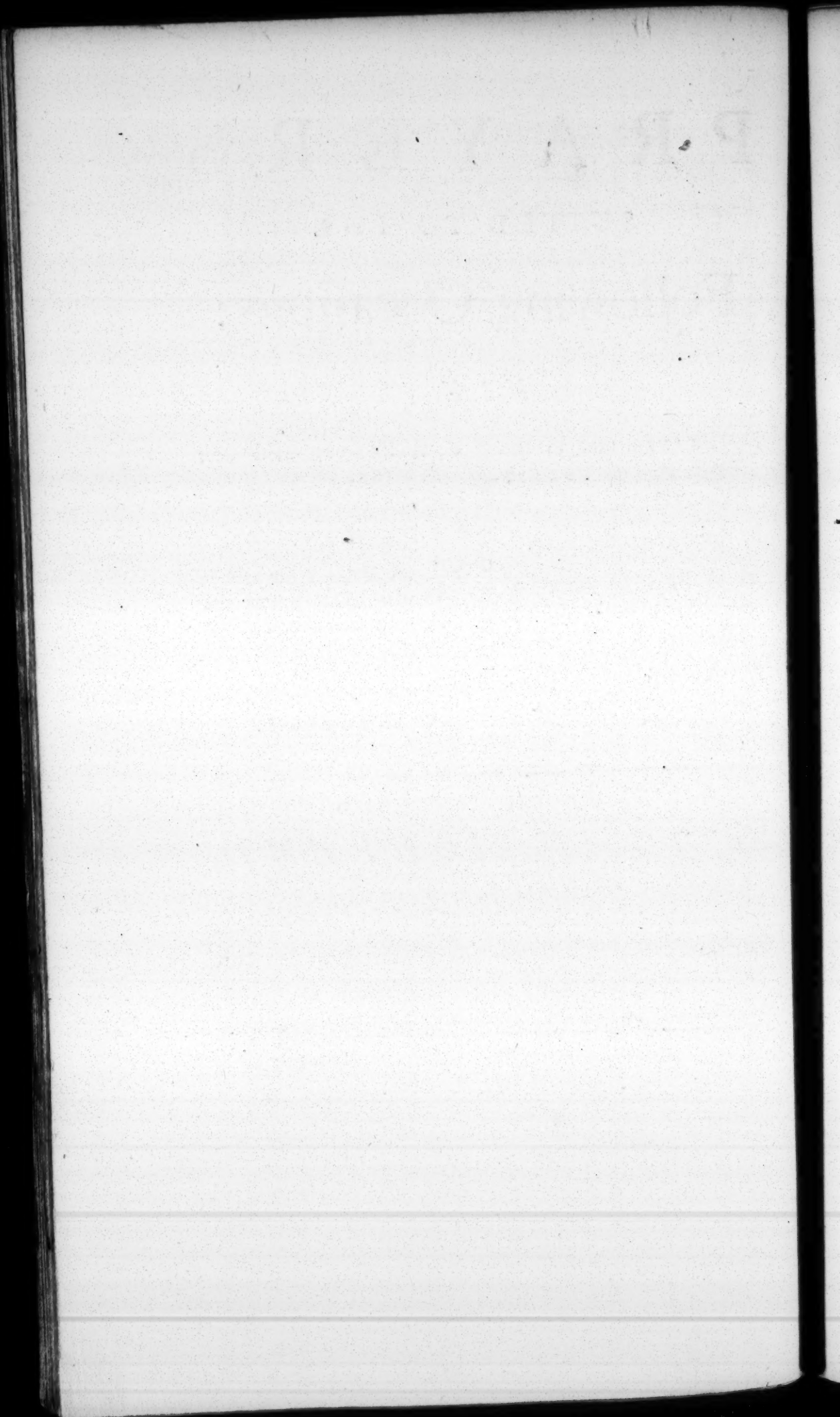
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# P R A Y E R S

U S E D O N

V A R I O U S O C C A S I O N S .

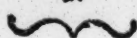
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*A PRAYER used in the Beginning of*  
P U B L I C W O R S H I P .

**O** *Most great and glorious* LORD our PRAYER  
God! We, thy Subjects, and de-  
pendent Creatures, would present  
ourselves before Thee, at this Time, with  
Sentiments of Humility, and profound Vene-  
ration; adoring Thee, as the One, Only  
living, and true God, and the only proper  
Object of our religious Homage and Wor-  
ship; for Thou only art every where pre-  
sent, to hear our Supplications, and Praises;  
and art alone possessed of infinite Wisdom  
to contrive, almighty Power to execute, and  
perfect Goodness to desire our Happiness.

A 2

WE;



*A Prayer used in the*

WE are sensible, that our Goodness cannot extend to Thee, and that thy Perfections and Glory can receive no Addition from *our* imperfect Services. Thou art thoroughly acquainted with all our Circumstances and Wants, and needest not that we should inform thee of them by our Prayers and Addresses. Thou art also a Being of unchangeable and generous Goodness; at all Times disposed to bestow upon us real Blessings, without being solicited by our Intreaties and Supplications. We would not, therefore, vainly propose by our religious Worship to promote thy Perfection, to increase thy Knowledge, or to move thy Compassion; but in order to testify to others our Regard for Thee, the Author of our Beings; to excite and improve good Dispositions in our own Minds; and, by contemplating and admiring thy Excellencies, to form our Spirits into a Resemblance to Thee, the exalted Object of our Worship, would we now join together in expressing before thee the sincere Gratitude and Devotion of our Hearts; which is our reasonable Service.

O LORD,

## *Beginning of public Worship.*

5

PRAYER

I.

O LORD! We intreat thee, assist us to perform the solemn Duties, in which we are now engaging, in such a manner, as shall render our Services acceptable to thee, and of great Advantage to our own Souls. Thou who hast constant access to our Minds, we earnestly implore thy divine Influence and Aid, to put us into a suitable Frame and Temper of Mind, for conversing with heavenly Objects, and to excite in us a Spirit of genuine Piety and true Devotion.

MAY we worship Thee, the all-seeing Spirit, in Spirit and in Truth; and offer up unto Thee a pure, holy, and acceptable Sacrifice. May we consider, that we are now, and at all times, in the Presence of that God, who searcheth the Hearts, and trieth the Reins of the Children of Men; and clearly sees through the most artful Disguises of Hypocrisy; may we, therefore, be afraid to praise thee with our Mouths, and honour thee with our Lips, while our Hearts are wandering at the ends of the earth.

MAY no intruding Cares disturb our Devotion; no mean Desires and Affections in-

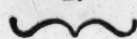
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errupt



PRAYER

I.



interrupt our Communion with Heaven, or suspend our delightful Intercourse with Thee, the Father of our Spirits. May our Souls be wholly and closely engaged in the secret Exercises of Religion ; and cleansed from all those Thoughts and Imaginations, which, however innocent they might be at other Times, would be criminal and impertinent when we profess to be employed in thy *immediate* Service.

AND now, O LORD ! be Thou in the midst of us, and bless us with spiritual Blessings, while we attend in thy Courts. And with us be gracious also to every Assembly of worshipping Christians this Day. May the Gospel of Christ have free Course, and be glorified, both with Us, and with Others ; and manifest itself to be the Power, and the Wisdom of God to the Salvation of Souls. May it every where triumph over Sin and Corruption ; and become the powerful Instrument of turning many Souls out of the paths of Wickedness and Folly, into the Way which leads to everlasting Life. May Sinners be converted, and Saints be establish-

I

ed,

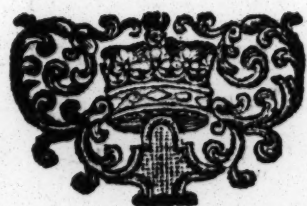
*Beginning of public Worship.*

7

ed, and built up in Piety and Goodness;  
and may none be disappointed, who wait  
for the Joys and Consolations of Religion.

PRAYER  
I.

HEAR us, *merciful* GOD! pardon our  
Imperfections, and accept of our Services.  
All we beg in the Name of JESUS CHRIST,  
our only Mediator and Advocate: To whom  
with thee, O FATHER, be everlasting  
Praises. Amen.





*Another PRAYER used in the Beginning of PUBLIC WORSHIP.*

PRAYER  
II.

**O** ALMIGHTY and most merciful FATHER! Thou art GOD, and there is none besides thee, nor any worthy to be compared with thee; a Being possessed of every Perfection, and that in the highest and most exalted Degree. Thy Nature is eternal, and unchangeable; thy Presence boundless and unconfined; thy Power is equal to the Execution of every Purpose; thy Knowledge is universal; thy Goodness endures for ever, and extends to all thy Works.

FROM Thee we derived our Being, and on Thee we constantly depend for the Continuance of it. Thou art the GOD of our Lives, and the Length of our Days. To Thee we are indebted for all our present Enjoyment; and in Thee do all our Hopes of future Happiness center. Whom then have we in Heaven, but Thee? Or what is there



*A Prayer used, &c.*

9

PRAYER  
II.

there on Earth, that our Souls can admire, and love in Comparifon with thee? Or to whom fhall we come, but to thee? For un-  
thee do our beft Services moft righteoufly belong.

WE efteem it our great Honour and Privilege to adore and worship thee; and would approach thee at this time with Reverence and godly Fear. And, O THOU FATHER of Lights, and GOD of Truth, enlighten our dark Underftandings, and enrich our Souls with the Treafures of Wifdom. May we receive the Truth in the Love of it; may it enter into our Minds with deep and lively Impreffions; may it mafter our Prejudices, difpel the uncomfortable Clouds of Ignorance and Error; and become at once the Delight of our Hearts, and the Guide of our Conduct.

MAY we read, and hear thy Word with that ferious Attention and Reverence, which it's Importance and divine Character juftly demand. While we contemplate thy glorious and amiable Perfections, may the Image of them be formed and improved in our own Minds; may our Souls go forth in  
holy

*Another Prayer used in the*

PRAYER

II.

holy and pious Affections; in Admiration, and Love; In Joy and Hope; in Trust and Dependence; and may we esteem it the best, the truest, and most devout Worship of God, to become like that BEING we adore. May we sing thy Praises, and pour forth our Thanksgivings before thee, with pious Chearfulness and grateful Sentiments. And, when we offer up our further Supplications unto thee, may we address thee with honest Views, with chaste and holy Desires; may we pray in Faith, nothing doubting; exercising a firm Confidence in thy Goodness, and resting with intire Dependence on thy Word and Promises. Teach us to distinguish between Good and Evil, and to desire those things only, which will conduce to our true Interest and Advantage; and whatever we ask at thy Hands, may it always be with this Exception, if it be consistent with the wise and good Order of thy Providence, and agreeable to thy holy Will, into which we would finally resolve all our Desires.

GUIDE us, O LORD, by thy Spirit and Counsel through what remains of this mortal

tal

*Beginning of Public Worship.*

tal Life. May our Souls be advancing daily in Wisdom, Piety, and Goodness, and be gradually prepared for the spiritual Delights, and divine Exercises of the heavenly World; and at length receive us to thyself in Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

II  
PRAYER  
II.



III. *A Prayer*





*A PRAYER used in Public before  
the SERMON, in the Morning.*

PRAYER  
III.

~ **O** *Almighty* and most *gracious* FATHER !  
Thou art GOD over all, blessed for  
ever, a Being infinite, eternal, and unchange-  
able in all *natural* and *moral* Perfections.  
The Glories of thy Nature far surpass our  
most raised Conceptions. We cannot by  
searching find out GOD; we cannot find  
out Thee, the Almighty, to Perfection. Yet,  
blessed be thy Name, thou hast made us  
capable of discovering so much of thy Na-  
ture, and Perfections, as entitles Thee to our  
Homage, Reverence, and Love.

THY Being, O LORD, is boundless and  
immense. Thou canst not be excluded out  
of any Place, nor confined within any Li-  
mits. We cannot go from thy Spirit; We  
cannot flee from thy Presence. Could we  
ascend up into Heaven, the Order and Har-  
mony

*A Prayer used in Public, &c.*

13

PRAYER  
III.

mony of the heavenly Bodies confess, thou art present there. Could we go down into Hell, behold thou art also there. Thou constantly pervadest the whole Universe, and fillest Heaven and Earth with thy Presence.

AND, as every Thing is surrounded by thy boundless Being, so every thing lies open to thy all-seeing Eye. Thy Knowledge extends to all Affairs and Events throughout the Universe; and takes in all things past, present, and to come, at one clear and certain View. Thou knowest all Things, which are done in Heaven; and nothing, which comes to pass among the Children of Men, can possibly escape thy exact Notice and Observation. When we converse with our fellow-Creatures, and appear before the Face of the World, we are under thy Inspection; and when we are alone by ourselves, or covered with the Shades of Night and Darkness, Thou, LORD, seest us; for the Darkness hideth not from thee, but the Night shineth as the Day; the Darkness and the Light are both alike to thee. Nor art thou a Witness to our *outward* Behaviour only, but also to every thing which passeth *within*

us.

*A Prayer used in Public before*

PRAYER

III.

us. Thou art conscious to all the secret Motions of our Wills, and perfectly well acquainted with every rising Affection, and silent Wish of our Souls; and should we foolishly attempt to hide any thing from Thee, thy infinite Understanding would immediately discern that very Intention, and effectually disappoint our treacherous Design.

THOU art also a GOD of Power irresistible. By thy Power were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of thy Mouth. The Earth also is thy Workmanship, the World, and they that dwell therein. Thou spakest, and it was made; thou commandedst, and it was established. All Nature leans on thy Almighty Arm, and is continually sustained and supported by thy powerful Providence. Thou doest what pleaseth thee in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of this lower World. None can stay thy Hand, or say unto Thee, with a prevailing Voice, what doest Thou?

THE Consideration of these thy Attributes, and the Thoughts of an eternal, immense, and powerful Nature, observing all things  
in



*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

15

PRAYER  
III.

in the Universe, privy to all our Thoughts and Intentions, who disposeth of every thing with matchless Might; and whose Will no Creature can resist, might fill our Minds with Wonder and Astonishment, or make us tremble at every Reflection on thy continual Presence with us, and Inspection of our Conduct; but thy Goodness casts an amiable Lustre on all thy other Perfections, and renders Thee the proper Object of our Love and Trust, our Hope and Dependence. Goodness, O LORD, is the Principle of thy Conduct, and the Happiness of the Universe is the End of thy Government. This renders thy Almighty Power, thy infinite Knowledge and constant Presence the Joy of our Hearts, the Support of our Souls, and the Subjects of pleasing and delightful Contemplation. Help us, we beseech thee, to be suitably affected with this Thought; to rejoice in it, and dwell upon it with proper Sentiments.

WE would call upon our Souls, and all that is within us to praise and celebrate that Goodness and Love, which constantly cherisheth and adorneth the Creation, and  
causeth

causeth every part of Nature to abound with Beauty, Order, and Happiness. All thy Works, O God, are good and perfect; all thy Counsels and Purposes are holy and righteous, and the whole of thy Administration is unblameable and just.

WE adore that *Goodness*, which is not confined to superior Beings, and the more worthy Inhabitants of the heavenly World, but sheds its beneficial Influence on this our Earth also, and visits with kind Regards the ungrateful Sons of Men. We praise thee, that thou hast called us up into Being, to be Spectators of thy goodly Works, Instruments in the hand of thy Providence, and Partakers in the Effects of thy Bounty and Goodness. We thank thee that thou hast made us such Beings as we are; that thou hast formed our Bodies with such exquisite Art and Skill, and adapted them so exactly to the Situation and Circumstances, in which thou hast placed us; and that we are furnished with Senses, to distinguish the Means of our Preservation, and with Appetites, exciting us to apply them to our Use.

BUT

*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

17

PRAYER  
III.

BUT especially would we praise thee for the nobler Frame, and Constitution of our Minds; that thou hast given us Understanding above the Beasts of the Field, and made us wiser than the Fowls of Heaven; that thou hast formed us in thine own Image, and placed us at the Head of this lower Creation; that thou hast endowed us with the Powers of Thought and Reflection, and made us capable of such exalted Employments, of such solid, generous, and lasting Pleasures; that thou hast given us a Relish not only for the Enjoyments of Sense and Imagination, but also for those better and more refined Satisfactions, which result from the Contemplation of Truth, the Exercise of *friendly* and *social* Dispositions, and from the Love and Practice of Religion and Goodness. Every thing, O LORD, within us, and about us, proclaims thy Praise, displays thy Goodness, and demands from us a tribute of Thankfulness and Gratitude.

WE would also love thee with all our Hearts, and bless thy Name for ever and ever, upon account of that rich *Grace* and *Mercy* thou hast manifested in the *Redemption*

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of

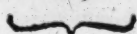
BUT



*A Prayer used in Public before*

PRAYER

III.



of our fallen Race. We praise thee, that when Mankind had debased their distinguishing Powers, and departed from Thee their Creator ; when they lay immerfed in Ignorance and Vice, and were become sadly corrupt in their Understandings and Affections ; that then thou hadft Compaffion upon us, and didft contrive, and execute the Method of our Recovery by JESUS CHRIST. We thank thee for that perfect Pattern of all Holinefs and Virtue, which He has fet before us ; for the pure and excellent Precepts delivered to us in his Gospel ; for the full and joyful Affurance it gives us of a happy Immortality, on the juft and reasonable Terms of Repentance, Faith, and an holy Life ; and for the Promifes it contains of the gracious Aid and Affiftance of the Spirit, in the Purfuit of Virtue, Glory, and everlafting Happinefs.

WE praise thee, that this Grace, which bringeth Salvation unto all Men, hath appeared alfo unto Us ; teaching us, that denying all Ungodlinefs, and worldly Lufts, we fhould live foberly, righteoufly, and godly in this prefent World ; and that, notwithstanding the Unfruitfulnefs of our lives, we are ftill  
allowed

*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

19

allowed to stand in thy Vineyard, where the Dews of Heaven fall upon us, and all proper Means are at work, to improve our Souls in Knowledge and Goodness, and train us up for that eternal World, towards which we are hastening.

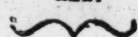
PRAYER  
III.

WE thank thee, that in the mean time, thou makest Life a Blessing to us, by furnishing us with a Variety of Satisfactions and Enjoyments. We acknowledge ourselves indebted to thy Goodness for all the Advantages we have enjoyed in Youth, Education, or riper Years; for our Health, and Freedom from melancholy Pains and Disorders; for the continued Use of our Rational Faculties; for the delightful and generous Satisfactions arising from Society, and a mutual Intercourse of kind Offices; for all our valuable Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance; and for every Thing, which has contributed to the Comfort and Content of Life, or to the Improvement of our Souls in Grace and Goodness.

WE thank THEE for the Provision thy Bounty furnisheth against the Wants and Necessities of our frail and perishing Na-

B 2

tures;

*A Prayer used in Public before*PRAYER  
III.

tures; for the beneficial Influence of the heavenly Bodies, the light of the Sun, the constant Revolution of the Seasons, and the regular succession of Day and Night. We praise thee that thou causest the Vapors to ascend, and fall down in Rains to refresh the Ground; that thou commandest the Winds to blow, and the Earth to pour forth its beautiful and useful Productions, in such great Plenty and Abundance; and that thou hast subjected to us the inferior Creatures, and made them subservient to our Use and Benefit.

WE thank THEE, that, by thy watchful Providence, thou hast preserved our Lives to this Moment; conducted us through numberless Dangers, Accidents, and Distempers, which we could neither foresee nor prevent, by any Prudence or Power of our own: and allowed us, at this time, to join together in praising thee with grateful Joy and Cheerfulness.

THY Mercies, O LORD, are like the Sand on the Sea-shore; they surpass the power of Thought to conceive, or of Numbers to recount; they are new to us every Day, and  
in-



*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

21

increase as fast as the fleeting Moments of our Duration. Grant, we entreat thee, that we may always reflect upon them with grateful and pious Sentiments; and express our Gratitude, not by our Tongues only, but by chearfully complying with all thy Intentions, and devoting our Lives to the Obedience of thy Commandments.

PRAYER  
III.

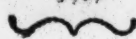


WE would be deeply concerned, O LORD, that in the past part of life we have not maintained a due Sense of thy inestimable Favours, nor a becoming Regard to the Obligations thou hast laid us under. We must acknowledge with Shame and Confusion of Face, that we have transgressed thy Laws in numberless Instances, notwithstanding that they are perfectly just and reasonable in themselves, and calculated to advance our own best Interests. Thou hast made us reasonable Creatures, and endowed us with distinguishing Powers and Faculties; but we have laid our Glory in the dust, and acted unworthy the Dignity of our *Rational* Nature: we have neglected the Culture and Improvement of our Souls, defaced thy Image, and covered ourselves with Guilt and

*A Prayer used in Public before*

PRAYER

III.



Pollution. And though thou hast favored us with a particular Revelation of thy Will, and with all the Advantages for a holy and virtuous Life, which it was proper for the best of Beings to give, or which the reason of Man could expect; yet we have abused thy Grace, trampled on thy Authority, and turned a deaf Ear to thy Counsels and Commands.

WE lament before thee the Perverseness of our Wills, the Treachery of our Hearts, and the Inconstancy of our good Affections, our Proneness to corrupt Inclinations and sinful Lusts, and our Reluctance to the Practice of that, which is excellent and good. We have sinned, O FATHER, against Heaven, and in thy Sight, and are no more worthy to be called thy Children.

BUT, Thanks be to thy Name, Thou hast declared thyself a GOD *merciful and gracious, long-suffering, slow to Anger, and plentiful in Goodness*. In this thy Mercy, through Christ, we would rest all our Confidence, for the Pardon of our Sins, upon the Terms proposed to us in the Gospel of thy Son. And, we intreat Thee for thy Goodness sake,

*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

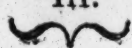
23

fake, and for the fake of Jesus Christ our Lord, be merciful to all our Unrighteousness, blot out our Transgressions, and be our reconciled GOD and FATHER.

PRAYER  
III.

As thou art the *righteous* GOD, who lovest *Righteousness*, but viewest Sin, and the Workers of Iniquity, with invariable Displeasure; we are convinced, that, if we regard Iniquity in our Hearts, thou wilt not hear our Prayers, nor take Complacency in us: At the same time therefore, that we pray for the Pardon of our past Sins, we beg thou wilt also free us from the Power and Dominion of Sin for the time to come. Renew us in the Temper of our Minds, and cleanse our Hearts from all mean Passions and hurtful Desires. May we remove all Iniquity far from us, and have no more Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darknes. Enable us entirely to abandon all our Vices, convinced that they are a Source of Reproach and Dishonour, and directly tend to Misery and Ruin. And may we sincerely love, and uniformly practise Virtue and Goodness, out of a regard to its native Beauty and Excellence; to thy Authority, by which it is



*A Prayer used in Public before*PRAYER  
III.

supported; and to that everlasting Happiness with which it is unchangeably connected.

ASSIST us, we intreat thee, O THOU GOD of all Grace and Mercy, to surmount all the Opposition we may have to encounter, in the course of a holy and virtuous Life, May neither the Frowns nor Flatteries of the World, nor the Lusts and Corruptions of our own Hearts; neither the Difficulties, which may at any time attend virtuous pursuits; nor the false and deceitful Pleasures, which Vice may propose; may neither things present, nor things to come, ever separate our Souls from the Love of GOD and Goodness, or cause us to desert our Duty in any Instance.

WE are sensible, O LORD, of the Imperfection of our Understandings, the Weakness and Inconstancy of our good Affections, and of the Strength and Number of the Temptations with which we are surrounded; we beg therefore thou wilt be present with us in every Hour of Difficulty and Danger. May thy Holy Spirit fix and strengthen our wavering Hearts, support our pious Purposes and good Resolutions, inspire us at all times with

*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

25

with divine, honest, and generous Sentiments, and suggest to our Minds proper Motives and useful Truths on all Occasions.

PRAYER  
III.

MAY we always act agreeably to the Dignity of our Rational Nature, and rightly apply those distinguishing Powers with which thou hast honoured us. May we never obscure and deface the divine Image by disorderly Passions, impure Lusts, and vicious Affections; nor abuse our noble Powers, by making them the Slaves of Sin and Corruption; but may we cultivate the best and most worthy Dispositions, and adorn ourselves with gracious Habits, and a heavenly Temper: and having Thee for our Guide and our Pattern, may we earnestly aspire after, and gradually advance towards that state of Perfection, Glory, and Happiness, which thou hast made us capable of attaining.

AND as we are favoured with the Light and Advantages of *Revelation*, and have taken upon us the Profession of *Christianity*, may our Tempers and Lives be suitable to those glorious Privileges and exalted Hopes we derive from the Gospel. May we walk worthy of our high and honourable Vocation,  
and

and adorn the Doctrine of CHRIST our Saviour in all things. May we love and imitate that Pattern of divine Excellence, which is exhibited to us in the Character of our Redeemer. We would resemble him in his Piety and Devotion, in his extensive Charity and generous Benevolence, in his Patience, Meekness, and chearful Resignation to the divine Will; and would cherish in our Souls all those divine and lovely Qualities, which shone so conspicuously in his Character, and rendered him the Friend of Mankind, and the Favourite of Heaven. We would govern our Lives uniformly by the Precepts of the Gospel, and admit the proper Influence of the Promises and Threatnings contained therein upon our Tempers and Conduct.

ASSIST us, we pray Thee, in discharging the Obligations of Virtue in their whole Extent; and in performing all the Duties we owe to Thee, and to our Fellow-Creatures.

WE would endeavour to form just Conceptions of thy infinite Excellencies, and to entertain honourable and becoming Sentiments of thy Providence and moral Character;



*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

27

PRAYER  
III.

ter ; and regarding Thee, not only as the powerful Creator and supreme Governor, but also as the kind Father, and bountiful Benefactor of the Universe, we would love thee with all our Hearts, with all our Souls, with all our Strength, and with all our Minds ; and would manifest the Sincerity of our Love to thee by obeying thy Laws, submitting ourselves to thy Providence, and chearfully complying with all thy Intentions concerning us.

WE would look upon those *benevolent* Affections, which thou hast implanted in us, as plain Intimations that we were designed for Society, and born not for ourselves only, but for the public Good ; for our Relations, our Friends, our Country, and all Mankind : we would, therefore, be careful to preserve these Affections in their due Strength and Exercise, and endeavour to keep our Minds free from every unkind, unnatural Passion. May we love our Fellow-Creatures, as Brethren, with a sincere and undissembled Affection ; rejoicing with those that rejoice, sympathizing with those that mourn, and endeavouring to promote the Content and Happiness of all around

*A Prayer used in Public before*PRAYER  
III.

around us, according to our best Prudence and Ability; herein imitating thy sovereign Goodness, which is continually diffusing Happiness through all the Works of thy Hands, and blessing with unwearied Bounty every part of thy infinite Dominion.

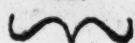
ENABLE us, we beseech thee, to keep ourselves, at all times, in such a Temper of Mind, and Habit of Body, as will best fit us for the Discharge of every Duty. May we never impair our Understandings, ruin our Health, or disqualify ourselves for honourable Offices, and useful Employments, by the intemperate pursuit of unmanly Pleasures: May we never be the Slaves of importunate Appetites, nor the Sport of imperious Passions; but may we aspire after that state of manly Liberty, that easy Habit of Self-Command, which will be the best Qualification for the Attainment of Wisdom and Virtue, and for the true Enjoyment and Tranquility of Life.

PREPARE us, O LORD, for all the unseen Events, which are ordained to befall us in the Course of thy Providence, during our Continuance in this uncertain World. With  
respect

*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

29

PRAYER  
III.



respect to our outward Condition and Circumstances in Life, we would refer ourselves intirely to thy wise Disposal; lead us whithersoever thou wilt, deal with us as thou pleasest; give us Poverty or Riches, Prosperity or Adversity, as shall seem best to thy infinite Wisdom and Goodness; bless us only with Peace and Content of Mind, and with Wisdom to adorn every Part and Circumstance of life, by a pious and becoming Behaviour. May a Sense of our Dependence on thee, and of the uncertain nature of all earthly Enjoyments, preserve us from Pride, from a Forgetfulness of God, or an ungenerous Treatment of our Fellow-Creatures, while our Circumstances in life are easy and prosperous. And may a Consciousness of our own Integrity, a well-grounded Sense of thy Favour, and the firm Hopes of everlasting Happiness, support us under all the evils of Life, and arm us against the Fears of Death.

As we are Creatures designed for an *everlasting* Life, may we not confine our Views within the narrow Limits of this World; but may we extend them into Eternity, and  
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be chiefly sollicitous to provide for that part of our Existence, which reacheth beyond the Grave. May the Consideration of the *Shortness* and *Uncertainty* of Life engage us to make the best Use of our *present* Moments. May we work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling; and apply ourselves to the Care of our Souls with the utmost Attention and Diligence, before our Feet stumble on the dark Mountains of Death. And may the Prospects of an *endless* Life and Happiness *hereafter*, raise us above all sordid and low Desires; animate and strengthen us in the Pursuits of Virtue; and effectually counterbalance the Weight of all worldly Temptations. May we be constant, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the LORD, forasmuch as we know that our Labour shall not be in vain in the LORD. And, finally, may we obtain the End of our Faith, and of our Hope, even the Salvation of our immortal Souls.

THESE Things, O LORD, as far as they are agreeable to thy Will, with whatever else Thou see'st convenient for us, we humbly desire thou wilt bestow upon us. Hear our Prayers,

*the Sermon, in the Morning.*

31

Prayers, merciful God; pardon our Sins, and fit us for the Duties in which we are now severally to be engaged. May we receive Truth with honest Hearts and willing Minds; may it be as Seed sown in good Ground, and bring forth Fruit to thy Glory, and the Salvation of our Souls. All we beg in the Name of JESUS CHRIST, &c.

PRAYER  
III.



A PRAYER



*A PRAYER used in Public before  
the SERMON, in the Afternoon.*

PRAYER  
IV.

~ **O** THOU first, supreme, and best of Beings! We present ourselves before Thee as the Creatures of thy Power, the Subjects of thy Government, and the Disciples of thy Son, JESUS CHRIST, our LORD; adoring THEE, as the One only infinite Mind, Sovereign in Nature, and ruling all things with the highest Perfection of Goodness, as well as of Wisdom and Power.

FROM Everlasting to Everlasting thou art GOD. From Thee all things are derived. The Universe is subject to thy Will, and conducted by thy wise and powerful Providence in all its Changes and Revolutions. By thy Power were the Heavens made, and all the Hosts of them by the Breath of thy Mouth. The Earth also, with its Inhabitants, is the Work of thy Hands. By thy

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Ordi-



*A Prayer used in Public, &c.*

33

PRAYER  
IV.

Ordinance these Heavens shall pass away, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat; the Earth also, and the Works that are therein, shall be dissolved and burnt up: But THOU, eternal GOD, *art*, and *wast*, and *art to come*; and knowest not Beginning, Change, or End.

THOSE of the highest Orders among the Rational Part of thy Creation, conscious of many Blemishes and Imperfections, veil and cover their Faces before thee: but thou art beyond our highest Conceptions, possessed of all those Excellencies, which can render the Contemplation of thy Character a truly pleasing and delightful Exercise; and the Imitation of it, in all possible Instances, our chief Good and highest Honour.

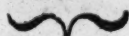
THOU, who art by Nature supreme and independent, hast created numerous Ranks of Beings with this most glorious Design, *to communicate Happiness*. Wherever we turn our attentive Eyes to the inanimate, sensitive, or rational World, we are encountered with surprizing Displays of infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. From the Order, Beauty, and Connexion, which runs through  
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all Nature, and the admirable Subserviency of its several Parts to the Perfection and Good of the Whole, we clearly collect the Immensity of thy Being, the Perfection of thy Understanding, thy resistless Might, and boundless Generosity; and hence are naturally led to adore and worship THEE, the original Author, the wise Preserver, and gracious Benefactor of the Universe. If we look up to the Heavens, the Heavens declare thy Glory, O LORD, and the Firmament sheweth thy Handy-work; or if we confine our Views to this Earth; the Earth also is full of thy Goodness, and proclaims to the Heavens thy Praise. How beautiful are thy Works! How amiable is the divine Administration! How plentifully dost thou provide for all thy Creatures! They are hungry, and thou feedest them; they ask, and thou grantest their Requests; thou openest wide thy bountiful Hand, and liberally satisfiest thy whole Creation with Good.

AMONG the rest of thy Creatures, we, O LORD, have great reason to speak well of the Conduct of thy Providence, and to render thee a tribute of sincere Praise and Thankfulness:

*the Sermon, in the Afternoon.*

35

PRAYER  
IV.  


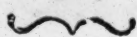
fulness : WE, whom thou hast raised so high in the scale of Being, and on whom thou hast conferred such honourable Distinctions ; WE, whom thou hast formed in thy own Image, and rendered capable of discerning thy Justice, admiring thy Providence, and willingly promoting the Ends of thy Government. We praise thee for the admirable Frame of our Bodies, and the exquisite Contrivance of our animal Nature ; but especially we praise thee for the nobler and more excellent Structure of our Minds ; that thou hast adorned our Nature with Reasoning Powers and Virtuous Principles, and hereby made us capable of right Action, and the noble Satisfaction arising from it. We adore thee for the Continuance and Preservation of Life, and for that rich Variety of Pleasures thou affordest us, whether of an animal, social, virtuous, or religious Nature.

WE bless thee, that, when Mankind were become deaf to the Voice of Reason, and had very much effaced that glorious Image thou hadst imprinted on their Minds ; that then thou wast pleased mercifully to interpose, and to send thy well-beloved Son,

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JESUS





*A Prayer used in Public before*

JESUS CHRIST, into the World, to enlighten, reform, and save them. We thank thee for the Revelation of thy Will, which we enjoy through thy Grace and Love; wherein the Obligations of Morality and Religion are enforced by such Arguments as cannot fail of working powerfully upon every attentive Mind; a Revelation, which gives us the most amiable Representation of thy Nature, and a very pleasing and satisfactory Insight into the Scheme of thy Providence, in the Government of the moral World; which assures us of Pardon upon Repentance, and has brought Life and Immortality to Light. We bless thee for all the Means of Grace, for the promised Aid of thy HOLY SPIRIT, and the full Assurance that a happy Eternity shall be the glorious Consequence of good Behaviour in this present World.

O LORD, we lament before thee the poor unworthy Returns we have made thee, for all this Profusion of Love and Goodness. We would look back with Shame and Regret on every Instance, wherein we have been ungrateful to Thee, or ungenerous to our Fellow-Creatures. Our Hearts have not been  
duly

*the Sermon, in the Afternoon.*

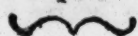
37

PRAYER  
IV.

duly and uniformly influenced by the Principles of Piety and Goodness; but have too often been deformed by sinful Inclinations, and drawn aside by corrupt Passions and Lusts. The awful Threatnings of the Gospel have not wrought sufficiently upon our Minds, nor its gracious Promises effectually excited us, at all times, to a life of Righteousness. We have too frequently refused thee that Homage and Obedience, which the Constitution of our Nature, and the Relations which subsist between THEE and us, plainly intimate to be thy due. We have covered our Souls with Shame, Guilt, and Pollution, have drawn upon us the Reproaches of our own Hearts, and exposed ourselves to thy just Displeasure.

PARDON our many transgressions, offended GOD, we humbly beseech thee; and be graciously reconciled to us, according to the riches of thy Grace and Mercy in JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

MAY we not, from any foolish and unreasonable Hopes of thy Pardon, continue in a Course of Rebellion and Disobdience against thee; but as we are assured, from the Holi-



ness of thy Nature, as well as by the express Declarations of the Gospel, that thou wilt receive none into thy Favour, but such as repent and forsake their Sins, we would endeavour to qualify ourselves for thy Acceptance and Love, by ceasing to do evil, learning to do well, and immediately breaking off all Communion with the unprofitable Works of Darknes.

WE would lay the restraints of Temperance and Moderation upon all those irregular Appetites and Passions, the Indulgence of which would certainly introduce Shame and Disorder into our own Natures, Misery and Confusion into Society. Destroy, O LORD, the bad Effects which the past Irregularities of our Lives might have upon our Minds; that neither our Understandings may be darkened, nor our Wills perverted by them. May we no longer put Darknes for Light, nor Light for Darknes; but remembering that Vice is always deformed and evil, Virtue always beautiful and good, may we ever pursue what we can heartily and calmly approve, and maintain an inviolable regard to



*the Sermon, in the Afternoon.*

39

to the Dictates of Conscience, and the Laws of Religion.

PRAYER  
IV.

TEACH us wherein our true Happiness consists, and the right Means of obtaining it; may we never be imposed upon by false Opinions of Good and Evil; never eagerly pursue those things, which are incapable of yielding sound Satisfaction, and Content of Mind; nor ever be solicitous to avoid any thing, which would not be inconsistent with Self-Enjoyment and a happy Life. Do thou enable us to distinguish duly our *true* and *proper* Good, from that which is *false* and *improper*, and suffer us not to forfeit any lasting Blessing of Futurity, for the sake of a present Sensation of transient Joy.

FROM consulting our own Natures, we are fully satisfied, that our highest Happiness must consist in inward Tranquility of Soul, and a Freedom from every evil Passion, in the Enjoyment of generous and humane Affections, and in the Exercise of becoming Dispositions towards Thee our God. We esteem this Happiness to be an Object worthy of our strongest Affection and most vigorous Pursuit; grant, gracious God, that

*A Prayer used in Public before*PRAYER  
IV.

our future Conduct may prove this to be our prevailing Sentiment; and, through thy blessing on our sincere and hearty Endeavours, may we obtain the Bliss, which we aspire after.

AND since, by our too many Deviations from the ways of Wisdom, and too frequent Indulgencies to Sin and Folly, we have rendered the practice of many Duties an arduous and difficult Task; grant us, we intreat Thee, the gracious Aid and Assistance of thy Spirit, to enlighten our Understandings, to correct our Wills, and to suppress all our irregular Propensities, that they may never more disturb our Quiet, nor hinder our easy Progress in the ways of Goodness.

ADORN our Minds, we pray thee, with every divine Quality and lovely Disposition; and may our Conduct be distinguished with all those virtuous Actions that our Circumstances will admit of. May we honourably discharge the Duties we are bound to, by the various Relations we stand in to others; receiving Favours with Gratitude, and Injuries with a meek and placable Temper; behaving with all due Respect to our Superiors,  
being

*the Sermon, in the Afternoon.*

41

being affable and obliging to our Equals, mild and condescending to our Inferiors, kind and benevolent to all. May we be just in our Dealings, true to our Promises, faithful to our Engagements, sincere and honest in our Professions, and generously answer as well the reasonable Expectations, as the legal and just Demands of all our Acquaintance.

PRAYER  
IV.

ENLARGE, we entreat thee, our Knowledge of *Divine* Things, and give us clearer and more comprehensive Views of thy glorious Perfections. May a deep Sense of thy sovereign Goodness, and a firm Persuasion of the perfect Equity and Justice of thy Providence, kindle in our Hearts a sincere Esteem and Affection to thy Nature; and may our Love to the divine Character shine forth in a becoming Imitation of it in all possible Instances. May a high Regard for thy Authority, and a strong Conviction of thy continual Presence, habitually possess our Spirits, and have their due Influence upon our Tempers and Conduct. And may this Consideration, that nothing can be hid from the infinite Mind, and the sovereign Judge



*A Prayer used in Public before*PRAYER  
IV.

Judge of all the Earth, engage us to cleanse our Souls from all mean Thoughts and vicious Desires, and prevent us from ever yielding to the strongest Temptations to secret Wickedness.

WITHDRAW our Affections, we pray thee, from the superficial Joys, and uncertain Pleasures of this present World ; fix our Desires upon, and engage our Pursuits after the Enjoyment of eternal Worth and Goodness, which never loseth of its high Importance to our Happiness, by Change of Place, or Time, or any other possible Circumstance.

WE hope, thou wilt never leave us, nor forsake us. Be always at our right hand, to guard us from Evil, to guide us in the Management of every important Affair ; and to strengthen us under every Affliction, whereby thou mayest be pleased to exercise our Virtue, throughout the various Scenes of this uncertain Life.

WE know not, O thou Governor of the World, what lies before us, nor what Changes we may have to undergo ; of this, however we are assured, and we desire to rest fully satisfied with this Assurance, that  
All

*the Sermon, in the Afternoon.*

43

PRAYER  
IV.

All Things are contained in the Extent of thy Dominion, that every event is thy Disposal, and that Thou, the supreme Ruler of All, art unchangeably *wise*, and *just*, and *good*; upon this account we desire to unite our own Wills with Thine, and chearfully to embrace whatever befalls us in the course of thy Providence. We would joyfully surrender ourselves, and all our Interests, into thy Hands, and willingly follow whithersoever Thou leadest us. We ask not for Riches, Honours, or Pleasure, neither do we pray for any *particular* Circumstance in this Life, but referring Ourselves intirely to the Disposal of thy Providence, with respect to these things, we only beg, Thou wilt enable us, at all times, to act with Decency the Part which is appointed us, and to adorn every Condition by a suitable Behaviour.

MAY we not, under favourable Circumstances, forget Ourselves, and the uncertain Nature of all human Things; may we not grow haughty and proud, insolent or oppressive, to our Fellow-Creatures; may we neither be unmindful of our many Obligations to Them, nor of our constant Dependence  
on

on Thee, and thy just Authority over us. If thou givest us Prosperity, and an Abundance of external things, may we receive them with Thankfulness, enjoy them with Innocence, and use them with Generosity and Prudence; and, if it shall please thee to bring us into Circumstances of Affliction and Distress, may we chearfully submit ourselves to thy Providence: may we never be prevailed upon, by any worldly Considerations, to renounce our Integrity, but remain firm and obstinate in our adherence to Thyself and Goodness. Instead of increasing the Evils which befall Ourselves, or Others, by our own Imprudence, or childish Fretfulness, may we, under the Influence of Pity or Patience guided by Discretion, strive to prevent their spreading, soften their Severity, and convert them, as far as possible into the means of promoting Virtue, and true unaffected Piety.

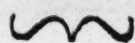
IN order to reconcile us to the promiscuous Dealings of thy Providence to Mankind, imprint deeply on our Minds this Persuasion; that, however little Distinction thou mayst appear to make, *at present*, between



*the Sermon, in the Afternoon.*

45

PRAYER  
IV.



tween the Righteous and the Wicked; yet Thou wilt ONE DAY, after a most grand and awful Manner, convince us All of the Rectitude of thy Nature, and the good Order of thy Providence, throughout the whole of which will shine forth the brightest Evidences of thy spotless Purity and perfect Goodness, at that Day, in which Thou wilt judge the World in Righteousness; rendering to the Wicked Tribulation and Anguish, and crowning the Righteous with the most distinguishing Honours.

AND, O gracious FATHER, excite every one of us to prepare our Souls with all Diligence for this most important Event. May we employ the short Remains of Life in purifying our Hearts from corrupt Affections; in improving every divine and virtuous Principle, and in aspiring after that Christian Perfection and Heavenly Temper, which alone can qualify us for the Happiness of the future World.

BE present with us at the Hour of Death, when the Powers of Nature fail us, be Thou our Support; may we spend that important Moment, which is the End of Time, and  
Com-

Commencement of Eternity, with a serene and chearful Countenance, and view with solemn Pleasure the awful prospect of Eternity. And whenever our Souls shall be discharged out of these Bodies, and called to appear naked before Thee, may they be found adorned with Righteousness, Purity, and Goodness; be approved by Thee, the infallible Judge of Excellence, and thought worthy to be received into the eternal Mansions of Bliss and Glory.

These things, O LORD, as far as they are agreeable to thy Will, with whatever else thou seest convenient for us, we humbly desire thou wilt bestow upon us. Hear our Prayers, merciful GOD, pardon our Sins, and fit us for the Duties in which we are now severally to be engaged. May we receive Truth with honest Hearts, and willing Minds; may it be as Seed sown in good Ground, and bring forth Fruit to thy Glory, and the Salvation of our immortal Souls. All we beg in the Name of JESUS CHRIST our LORD; in whose Words we would conclude our imperfect Supplications.

OUR FATHER, who art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us, this day, our daily Bread. And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory for ever and ever. Amen.







*The former part of a PRAYER used  
in PUBLIC after the SERMON.*

PRAYER  
V.

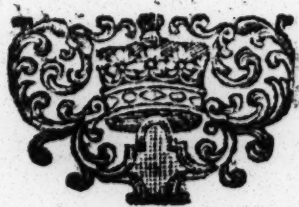
**O** LORD our GOD, Thou art the Author of our Being, the Father and Redeemer of our Souls.

WE praise thee, that thou hast made us rational and immortal Spirits, and provided so well for our Happiness both here and hereafter. We thank thee for the Hope of Glory, for the Means of Grace, and for all the Opportunities we enjoy for improving our Souls in Knowledge and good Dispositions.

GRANT, we beseech thee, merciful FATHER, that the Means of Grace may be made effectual to the purifying of our Hearts, the Refinement of our Tempers, and the Holiness of our Lives.

DELIVER us from all base and tormenting Passions, from all impure and hurtful  
Lusts.

OUR FATHER, who art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us, this day, our daily Bread. And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory for ever and ever: Amen.





*A PRAYER used in Public after the*  
S E R M O N .

PRAYER  
V.

**O** LORD our GOD, Thou art the Author of our Being, the Father and Redeemer of our Souls.

WE praise thee, that thou hast made us rational and immortal Spirits, and provided so well for our Happiness both here and hereafter. We thank thee for the Hope of Glory, for the Means of Grace, and for all the Opportunities we enjoy for improving our Souls in Knowledge and good Dispositions.

GRANT, we beseech thee, merciful FATHER, that the Means of Grace may be made effectual to the purifying of our Hearts, the Refinement of our Tempers, and the Holiness of our Lives.

DELIVER us from all base and tormenting Passions, from all impure and hurtful Lusts.



*A Prayer used in Public, &c.*

51

Lusts. Cleanse us from Sensuality, Avarice, and Ambition. Banish out of our Hearts all Anger, Envy, and Pride; and fortify us against the Evils of Life, and the Fears of Death. Save us, O gracious God, from every Thing which would pollute and deform our Souls, wound our Peace, and prevent our obtaining the proper Perfection and Happiness of our Nature.

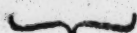
PRAYER  
V.

STRENGTHEN and improve in us every worthy Principle and virtuous Affection; may Goodness be wrought into our Tempers, and fixed in an uniform, uninterrupted Habit; may we always be aspiring after higher measures of Excellence, and growing daily in a Resemblance to Thee, the Father of our Spirits; may we make this our constant Business, our main Purpose at all times. Thus may we pass through Life with true Honour, and real Advantage to the World, lay down these frail Bodies with joyful Hope; and at length be admitted into a State, where our Virtue shall meet with no Interruption, nor our Happiness with any allay.

WE would not confine our Prayers to ourselves; but, agreeably to the Spirit and

D 2

Genius

*A Prayer used in Public*PRAYER  
V.  


Genius of our Holy Religion, we would also make Supplication for all our Fellow-Creatures. We would recommend the whole Family on Earth to Thee, their *Common* PARENT and bountiful Benefactor; and beg that thou wilt promote the best Interests of Mankind, in such a way as to thy infinite Wisdom shall seem most convenient.

SUFFER not such noble Beings to deform themselves; and deface thy Image, which is their greatest Glory; but do thou instruct the Ignorant, and reform the Vicious. Bring all Men to the Acknowledgment and Worship of Thee, the *only living and true GOD*; confirm and establish those, who are already engaged in the paths of Virtue and Happiness.

AND, that the Perfection and Happiness of human Nature may be more effectually promoted, and the Cause of true Religion and Goodness carried on in the World with greater Success, may the Gospel of JESUS take an *universal* Spread, and manifest itself to be the *Power* and *Wisdom* of God to the salvation of Souls.

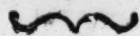
BLESS, we beseech thee, our *Native* Country. Be thou our Guardian, and sure Defence

Defence from all our Enemies. Pardon our Sins, and reform our Land. Put a Stop to prevailing Vices, Luxury and Idleness, Debauchery and Intemperance; may it be the great Concern of Every One to fill up worthily that Station in Society in which thou hast placed him, by an honest, diligent, and peaceable Behaviour. Promote amongst us that Righteousness which exalts a Nation; and destroy the Interest of Sin, which is the Reproach and Ruin of any People.

BLESS all our GOVERNORS, supreme and subordinate. May a public Spirit prevail among them, and a sincere Regard to the Interest of the Nation.

BE gracious to thy Servant and our Sovereign KING GEORGE. Bless him in his Person, his Family, his Councils, and his Arms. Preserve him from all his Enemies, assist him in the weighty Affairs of Government; give him Wisdom to discern, and Integrity to pursue the Happiness of these Nations. Crown all his Endeavours for the Public Good with abundant Success; and under his Government may we lead peaceable and quiet Lives in all Godliness and Honesty.





*A Prayer used in Public*

BLESS all the Branches of the Royal Family: Render them as illustrious by Princely Qualifications and Christian Virtues, as they are by their high Rank and Station in life.

BLESS all *Inferior* Officers and Magistrates. May they be steadily conducted by a regard to Justice and the Public Good. Make them the Scourges of Vice, a Terror to Evil-doers, and a Praise and Protection to them that do well.

SUCCEED the Ministers of the Everlasting Gospel, in the discharge of their difficult and important Work. May it be their great Concern to advance the Interest of true Religion, and promote the Happiness and Salvation of Souls; and may they successfully pursue this most valuable End, by sound Doctrine, rational Arguments, and unblemished Lives. [Bless thy Servant, who stately labours in this Place; preserve his Health, continue his Usefulness. May he, and his People, be mutual Blessings and Comforts to each other; and may Christian Charity, Brotherly Love, and real Goodness, flourish amongst them.]

VISIT

VISIT with Compassion all the Sons and Daughters of Affliction. [particularly such, for whom our Prayers are desired.] Remove their Disorders, if it be agreeable to thy Will. Teach them to bear whatever thou layest upon them, with Patience and a chearful Resignation to the Divine Providence; and may these light Afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.

PRAYER

V.

BE gracious, we intreat thee, to all our absent Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance: Thou knowest their various Wants and Circumstances; suit thy Mercies to them, and supply them out of thy abundant Fulness. Guide Them, and Us, through this Life in Paths of Innocence and Virtue; and at last unite us in the Glory and Happiness of thy heavenly Kingdom.

AND now, O LORD, we commit ourselves to the Protection of thy Providence, and the Influence of thy Grace. Dismiss us from thy House in Peace. May we visit our Habitations, and not sin; and may these Religious Exercises have a suitable In-



fluence on our future Lives and Conversations.

HEAR, and answer us; accept our Sincerity, and overlook our Imperfections, O most merciful GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

Now to Thee the King eternal, immortal, and invisable, the only wise, living, and true GOD, be ascribed Blessing and Praise, Honour and Thanksgiving, World without End. Amen.







PART of a PRAYER for a GENERAL FAST, *appointed to be observed in time of the late WAR.*

O ALMIGHTY and most merciful FATHER, Thou art GOD, and there is none besides thee, nor any worthy to be compared with thee. A Being possessed of every Perfection, and that in the highest and most exalted Degree.

PRAYER  
VI.

THY Nature is eternal and unchangeable, thy Presence boundless and unconfined; thy Power is equal to the Execution of every Purpose, thy Knowledge is universal, thy Goodness endures for ever, and extends to all thy Works.

THE World was created at first by thy Power, and all its Affairs are continually administered by thy Providence. The whole Course of Nature is under thy Direction.  
Thou

*Part of a Prayer for a General Fast,*

Thou doest what pleaseth thee both in the the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of this lower World: None can stay thy Hand, or say unto Thee, with a prevailing Voice, What doest Thou?

HUMAN Societies were formed by thy Appointment, and are conducted by Thee in all their Revolutions. By Thee Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice. Thou makest War, and createst Peace among all the Nations under Heaven. There is neither Good, nor Evil, in any State, but what enters into the Scheme of thy wise and righteous Providence.

WE adore Thee, as the LORD of Hosts, the KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords, the supreme Governor and Judge of all the Earth. All Men, whether high or low, are only the Instruments of executing thy Will, and fulfilling thy Designs; the Good willingly, the Bad unwillingly; but both are equally subservient to the Purposes of thy Government. We are satisfied that no Event cometh to pass without Thee, either in the *material, moral, or civil* World.

WE

*used in time of the late War.*

59

PRAYER  
VI.

WE most heartily rejoice, that thou, O LORD, a Being of such absolute and immutable Perfection, art at the Head of the Universe, managing all Affairs, and directing the whole Series of Events. We esteem it the most delightful Truth that can possibly enter into our Minds, that thy Kingdom ruleth over All, and thy Dominion endureth through all Generations. We would constantly rest our Minds upon this Thought, under all private and public Calamities, that may befall or threaten us.

WE desire, with Hearts full of grateful Sentiments, to acknowledge the Share we have heretofore had in the happy Effects of thy sovereign Goodness. We would adore Thee, both now, and at all times, for thy Grace manifested towards us in our Creation, Preservation, and Redemption, by JESUS CHRIST; but, at this time, we would praise thee especially for the Advantages we enjoy as Members of the Civil Society, to which we belong; that, through the Goodness of thy Providence, we had the Happiness to be born in a Land governed by such good Laws, and under so just and wise an Administration;



*Part of a Prayer for a General Fast,*

tion; that, while many neighbouring Nations are groaning under the grievous Calamities of Tyranny and War, we enjoy the sweet Fruits and blessed Effects of Liberty and Peace in such great Perfection. We praise thee, that our Lot was cast in BRITAIN, where the glorious Light of the Gospel shines around us; where Christianity is known and professed, free from those horrid Corruptions with which Popery had defaced and perverted it; and where we can serve Thee, our God, according to our Consciences, while none rise up to make us afraid.

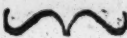
WE praise thee, that thou hast frustrated the repeated Attempts of our Enemies to subvert our happy Constitution, and destroy our Liberties and Laws. Blessed be thy Name, Thou hast appeared in our Defence, and wrought out Salvation for us, once and again, in our own, and in the Days of our Fathers, when, by secret Conspiracies or open Attacks, our Enemies have endeavoured to deprive us of what ought to be most dear to us, as Men, as Christians, and as Protestants.

WE

*used in time of the late War.*

61

WE gratefully acknowledge, O LORD, that we have been a People highly favoured of Heaven ; but the more distinguishing thy Goodness hath been towards us, the more aggravated is our Disobedience and Rebellion against thee. We have foolishly and wickedly departed from Thee, our gracious Protector and Guardian, transgressed thy Laws, and abused the Favours thou hast bestowed upon us. We would be deeply concerned, on account of the general Corruption of Manners that is too visible among us, the Luxury and Profaneness that hath covered and defiled the Land ; the Neglect of GOD and Religion, of Justice, Righteousness, and Christian Charity ; the Violence of Party and Faction, and the Indifference to the Public-Good, which prevails so generally among all Ranks of Men. We confess, O LORD, that on account of our crying Sins Thou mightest justly withdraw thy Protection from us, and make us feel the severe Effects of divine Displeasure.

PRAYER  
VI.  


BUT we intreat Thee, for thy Mercies sake, that thou wouldst pardon our manifold Offences, and withhold or recall those  
Judg<sup>a</sup>

Judgments we have deserved to suffer. Put a Stop to the Pestilence which rageth among our Cattle. Restrain, O LORD, if it be agreeable to thy Will, this dreadful Calamity. Succeed Methods that are used to prevent its Spread, and mercifully cause it to cease where it is. Support those that suffer heavy Losses. Teach us all to resign ourselves calmly to thy severe Dispensations, the severest of which, we know, are wise and merciful, in the Intention of thy Providence; and grant that, now thy Judgments are abroad in the Land, the Inhabitants of it may learn Righteousness.

AND, that we may be the proper Objects of thy Pardon and Forgiveness, do Thou incline us to forsake our Sins, and return unto Thee, the LORD our GOD, from whom we have departed.

WHILE we lament the Sins of Others, we desire to be deeply humbled under a Sense of our Own; and as we have each of us our share in the national Guilt, may we each of us contribute our part towards a national Repentance.

WE



WE desire not to shut our Eyes upon our own Miscarriages, nor to dissemble and choke our own Convictions, but rather still more clearly to discern what is sinful; to be more deeply sensible of the odious Nature of Sin, and its wretched Consequences, and more thoroughly convinced of the Offences we stand chargeable with, in order that, with true Humility and godly Sorrow, we may confess them unto Thee, earnestly imploring thy Forgiveness, with renewed purposes of better Obedience for the time to come. And do thou, most merciful Father, teach us to discover, and enable us immediately to reform whatever is criminal or unchristian, either in our Dispositions or Practices.

BLESS, we beseech thee, all Mankind. May the Churches of CHRIST flourish, and be a Glory to him. Pity such as are suffering by the Desolations of War. Restrain the evil Passions of tyrannical Princes, and disappoint their unjust and ambitious Views. Send forth a Spirit of Harmony and Peace among the Nations of the Earth. And do Thou, who canst bring Order out of Confusion,

*Part of a Prayer for a General Fast,*  
 fion, and Good out of Evil, cause the present Commotions of *Europe* to issue finally in thy Glory, and the Good of Mankind.

PRESERVE to us our Laws, our Religion, and present Government. Disappoint the Designs of those that disturb the public Peace. Inspire our Commanders with Wisdom and Fidelity; and animate those, who are to fight for us, with Valour and Resolution; and, if it be thy Will, grant us a speedy and happy Conclusion to our present troubles.

WE would recommend particularly to the Protection of thy Providence his Royal Highness the DUKE. Preserve his important Life; crown his Arms with success; may he be an Instrument in thy Hand of scourging the Tyrants of the Earth, of rescuing the oppressed, and maintaining the threatened Liberties of Mankind.

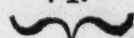
WE beseech thee, O gracious GOD, that the Ends for which this day is consecrated to thy Service, may every where be answered. Do thou hear the Supplications that shall be offered up unto thee in all our Assemblies;

*used in time of the late War.*

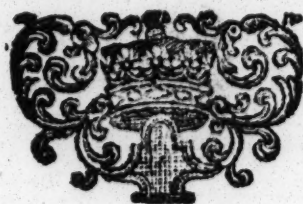
65

semblies; and when thou hearest, O LORD, do thou accept and forgive.

PRAYER  
VI.



WE are sensible, it is neither the Fervency of our Prayers, the Sorrow of our Minds, nor the Humiliation of our Bodies, that can render us acceptable in thy Sight. We cannot, we dare not hope to recommend ourselves to thy Favour and Protection by any thing but sincere Repentance, and the Practice of Virtue and Righteousness; we beg, therefore, thou wouldst incline our Hearts, and the Hearts of all Men in this Nation, to forsake their Sins, and return unto thee, the LORD their GOD, that thou mayest have Mercy upon us, and bless us, and defend us from all our Enemies. \* \* \* \* .



E

A PRAYER





*A PRAYER for a good Man under  
the Apprehensions of Death.*

PRAYER  
VII.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful FATHER! From everlasting to everlasting thou art GOD; a Being possessed of every Perfection proper to engage our Love, or encourage our Confidence.

WE can be in no circumstance of Distress, in which Thou art not able to support, or deliver us. Thou knowest every Pain we feel, every anxious Thought that oppresseth us; and thy Goodness never fails: Thou art a present Help in every time of need.

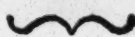
GRANT, O most merciful FATHER, that a steady Persuasion of thy infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness may dispose us to place an entire Trust and Confidence in Thee, at all Times, and under all Circumstances. We are sensible, that no thing whatsoever befalling us but by thy Appointment;

*A Prayer for a good Man, &c.*

67

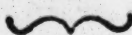
ment; and that thou never appointest any thing but what is absolutely for the best: we desire, therefore, chearfully to submit ourselves to thy Will, and acquiesce in all the Dispensations of thy Providence concerning us.

PRAYER  
VII.



WE praise thee, that thou hast encouraged us to fly to Thee in all our Distresses; and in every thing, by Prayer and Supplication, to make our Requests known unto Thee.

WE address thee, at this Time, in behalf of thy afflicted Servant here before thee. Pardon his Sins, and speak Peace to his Soul. May a consciousness of his own Integrity, a well-grounded sense of thy Favour, and the firm Hope of everlasting Happiness, enable him to bear up under his present Affliction with Christian Fortitude and Patience. May he now experience those consolations, which Religion naturally yields to a Good Man under the darkest circumstances. May he place his Confidence in thee, the Almighty and Eternal God; and find in thee an effectual Support under all his Pains and Apprehensions.

*A Prayer for a good Man*PRAYER  
VII.  


STRENGTHEN his Faith in Thee, and in thy sovereign Goodness. May he regard his Affliction as the chastening of a tender FATHER intended for his Benefit ; and may it be so improved as to answer the End for which it was designed. May it tend to strengthen his Faith, Patience, and Resignation to the Will of Heaven, to wean his Affections more and more from Earthly Things, and engage him to raise his Desires and Hopes to the Eternal Happiness of a better World.

WE are sensible, O LORD, we are ill qualified to judge what is best for ourselves, or for one-another, whether Health or Sicknes, Life or Death. It is our highest Happiness, that all our Affairs are determined by Thee, and our greatest Wisdom to acquiesce chearfully in all thy Appointments ; we pray, therefore, with the Deference which becomes us to thy infinite Wisdom and Goodness, that Thou wouldst ease the Pains of thy Servant, rebuke his Disorder, and restore him to Health. Restore him, if it be thy Will, to the comfortable Enjoyment of life ; restore him to his Family and Friends.

May

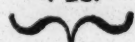


*under the Apprehensions of Death.*

69

May he still live to glorify thy Name, and serve his Generation.

PRAYER  
VII.



IF otherwise thou seest will be best for him, prepare him for whatever is thy Will concerning him. Grant that, while he lives, he may live to thy Glory, and that when he dies, he may die in thy Favour. O LORD, we beseech thee, preserve him in a comfortable Frame of Mind, fortify him against the Fear of Death, and enable him to expect his Dissolution with that Constancy of Mind and pious Resignation, which becomes a Christian. May he regard Death, as nothing else to a Good Man, but a Passage out of a World of Guilt, and Fear, and Sorrow, into a State of eternal Peace and unspeakable Felicity; and, regarding it in this light, may he view it approaching towards him without Terror or Disturbance. When he walks through the Valley of Death, be thou his Support. And grant, O most merciful FATHER, as the Sum of all our Prayers, that, whenever it shall please thee to remove him out of this World, he may be received into thy Presence, where there is Fulness of Joy, and Pleasures for

*A Prayer for a good Man, &c.*

evermore; and, at the general Resurrection in the last Day, he may be found of the happy Number of those, who shall have their perfect Consummation and Bliss, both in Body and Soul, in thy eternal and everlasting Kingdom. All which we humbly ask in the Name of JESUS CHRIST our LORD; in whom thou art reconciling the World unto thyself; by whom thou hast abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light.

Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy; to the only wise GOD, our SAVIOUR, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and for ever. Amen.





*A PRAYER for the USE of a*  
FAMILY.

**A**LMIGHTY and most merciful FATHER! Thou art GOD over All, blessed for ever; a Being infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in all Excellence and Perfection. Thou art present in every part of the Universe, and canst not be excluded out of any Place, nor confined within any Limits. Thy Power no force can resist. Thy Knowledge nothing can escape. Thou seeest all Things past, present, and to come, at one clear and certain View.

PRAYER  
VIII.

THESE Perfections of thy Nature might raise our Surprize and Wonder, and fill our Souls with Fear and Trembling; but thy Goodness casts an amiable Lustre on all thy other Excellencies, and renders Thee the object of our highest Veneration, Love, and Confidence, and entitles Thee to the Ho-



mage and Worship of the whole Rational Creation.

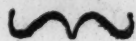
WE would adore that Goodness which constantly cherisheth and adorneth the Universe, and causeth every part of Nature to abound with Beauty, Order, and Happiness: which is not confined to superior Natures, and the more worthy Inhabitants of the Heavenly World, but sheds its beneficial Influence on this our Earth also, and visits with kind Regards the ungrateful Sons of Men. We praise that Goodness which supplies our Wants, and gives us All Things richly to enjoy; which preserves us from Dangers and Distempers that beset us on every side, and bestows on us so many valuable Blessings to sweeten the Journey of Life, and render our Passage through this World agreeable and delightful.

ABOVE all, we praise that Goodness which confines not our Hopes to this short and perishing Life, but encourageth us to extend our Views into Eternity, and look for a happy State beyond the Grave, which shall know neither Imperfection nor end.

*Use of a Family.*

73

PRAYER  
VIII.



BUT that Instance of thy Goodness which at this time especially demands our Gratitude and Praise, is the Protection thou hast vouchsafed to us through the last Night. We thank thee, that Thou hast preserved us through its dark and silent Watches, and raised us afresh this Morning to Action and Enjoyment. Thy mercies, O LORD, are new to us every Morning, and thy faithfulness is repeated every Night; every Morning and every Night, therefore, would we shew forth thy Praises, and repeat our thankful Acknowledgments.

GRANT, O most gracious GOD, that a steady Persuasion of thy infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness may dispose us to place an entire Trust and Confidence in Thee at all times; particularly, we would commit ourselves, and all our Concerns without reserve, to thy Care and Providence throughout this Day.

O LORD, if it seem good in thy sight, suffer no Evil to befall us, no Being to hurt us, at least, let us not hurt ourselves by our own Folly and Imprudence. Deliver us from every thing that would disturb the  
Peace

*A Prayer for the*

Peace of our Minds, or render us unfit for the innocent Enjoyments and proper Business of Life. May we not give ourselves up to Sloth and Indolence, nor to the Pursuit of any shameful or dangerous Pleasures. May we indulge no impetuous Passions, or irregular Appetites; but study to be perpetually employed about something laudable, useful, and good; that so, if it be thy gracious pleasure, that Death shall this Day put a period to this our mortal Life, it may find us doing those things, which are well-pleasing in thy sight; or, if we are brought to the Conclusion of this day in Health and Safety, we may review our Temper and Behaviour with Joy and Cheerfulness, and delight ourselves with solid Hopes of the divine Complacency and Approbation.

AND we implore thy Favour and gracious Presence, O LORD, not through this Day only, but through all the Days we have to spend on this Earth, and through all the succeeding parts of our Existence. We resign ourselves to thy sovereign Disposal with the greatest Cheerfulness and Serenity of Mind. Do with us what Thou wilt, dispose of us

as



*Use of a Family.*

75

PRAYER  
VIII.

as thou pleatest; thy Will shall be our Will, for we are satisfied Thou never willest any thing but what is absolutely the best. As for us, we are frail, ignorant Creatures, apt to mistake our true Interest, frequently desiring those things which are hurtful, and averse to those which are good for us; we rejoice, therefore, that our Condition and Circumstances are not left to our own dangerous Choice; but are fixed and determined by the divine Appointment: and, in our Prayers, we would not presume to prescribe to thy infinite Wisdom, we only beg, that thou wilt give us what will be really good for us, whether we ask it, or not; and withhold from us all real Evils, though, through the Imperfection of our Understandings, we should fondly desire them.

WE intreat Thee, O LORD, enrich our Minds with all useful and valuable Knowledge, and adorn us with the most amiable Qualities and Dispositions. Incline us by thy Grace always to act agreeably to the Constitution of our Nature, and to pursue the great End for which we were created.

As

*A Prayer for the*

As Thou hast made the Desire of Happiness necessary to us, we beg thou wilt teach us what Pleasures and Enjoyments are Good for us. May we never be too fond of those which are superficial, uncertain, and transitory, however innocent in themselves; and as for those which are shameful and dishonourable, destructive of Virtue and a good Conscience, may we always regard them as dangerous Snares, as inconsistent with our best Interests, and therefore to be avoided with the greatest Care; but may we place the highest Value upon those noble and substantial Enjoyments, which result from Virtue, Wisdom, and a good Mind, from a Resemblance of Thee, our Heavenly FATHER, a Consciousness of thy Approbation, and the firm Expectation of everlasting Happiness. May we direct our most vigorous Endeavours and Pursuits towards these exalted Satisfaction, which constitute the Dignity, the Perfection and Happiness of our Rational Natures; may we reject with disdain every thing, which can come into Competition with them, nor ever be discouraged or diverted from the glorious Pursuit by the  
pro-

*Use of a Family.*

77

prospect of any Pains or Difficulties whatsoever.

PRAYER  
VIII.

WE would look back upon those benevolent Affections, which thou hast implanted in us, as plain Intimations that we are designed for Society, and not born for Ourselves only, but for the Public Good, for our Friends, our Country, and all Mankind; we would, therefore, be careful to preserve these Affections in their due Strength and Exercise, and endeavour to keep our Minds free from every unkind, unnatural Passion. May we love our Relations, our Friends, and our Country with a strong and undissembled Affection; rejoicing with those that rejoice, sympathizing with those that mourn, and promoting the Happiness of All around us to the utmost of our Ability; herein imitating thy sovereign Goodness, which is continually diffusing Happiness through all the Works of thy Hands, and blessing every part of thy infinite Dominion.

AND, since thou hast made us Rational Beings, may we never be like the Brutes, which have no Understanding, never forget our noble Privilege of Reason, never act in-  
confi-



*A Prayer for the*

considerately, rashly, or at random; but may we endeavour to attain a sound Judgment, and a well-exercised Understanding; that so we may always discern and propose to ourselves the best and wisest Scheme of life, and behave in every Condition and Circumstance with Prudence and Discretion.

DELIVER us, we beseech Thee, from all base and tormenting Passions, from all impure and hurtful Lusts. Cleanse us from Sensuality, Avarice, and Ambition. Banish out of our Hearts all Pride, Passion, and Envy, and fortify us against the Evils of Life, and the Fears of Death. Save us, O gracious God, from every Thing which would pollute and deform our Souls, wound our Peace, and prevent us from obtaining the proper Perfection and Happiness of our Nature.

STRENGTHEN and improve in us every virtuous Inclination and divine Disposition. May Goodness be wrought into our Tempers, and fixed in an uniform, uninterrupted Habit. May we always be aspiring at higher measures of Excellence, and growing daily in a Resemblance to Thee, the FATHER of our Spirits. May we make this our constant

*Use of a Family.*

79

PRAYER  
VIII.

stant Business, our main Purpose at all times :  
Thus may we pass through Life with true  
Honour and real Advantage to the World ;  
lay down these frail Bodies with joyful Hope,  
and at length be admitted into a State, where  
our Virtue shall meet with no Interruption,  
nor our Happiness with any Allay. All we  
beg in the Name of JESUS CHRIST our  
Lord. Amen.

T H E E N D .

